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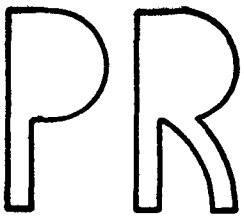

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BERNARD MALAMUD's latest novel, **A New Life,** published by Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, is reviewed in this issue. He is now teaching at Bennington College.

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THE COLD WAR AND THE WEST

The contributions that appear here are replies to the following statements and questions.

As the situation becomes more critical, we think it important to reexamine some of the basic issues of the cold war which tend to become obscured by day-to-day politics even though they are expressed by them.

We feel that if these questions and their implications are not faced, we may find ourselves drifting from one position to another, always on the edge of nuclear destruction, reduced to a rhetoric of good will and indignation or to action taken blindly and without an adequate sense of history.

We would like you to participate in a symposium on these issues. The following questions are intended only as a guide, to provide a context for the discussion. You are of course free to answer or ignore any of the questions or to discuss the problem in any way you choose.

1. What is your opinion of the position of the West in the cold war? Has the West been winning, losing or holding its own? If you think it has been losing, or is likely to lose in the future, to what do you attribute this? Which features of the social and economic system prevailing in the West generally, and in the U.S. in particular, account for failures in coping with Soviet Communism?

2. To what degree is it desirable and possible for the U.S. so to re-orient its policies as to identify with the movements and leaders of change throughout the world, instead of supporting the opponents of radical social reform, as the U.S. has tended to do in the past? Do you think the present administration is making any decisive change in American policy in this respect?

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3. Does the position of democratic socialism have any relevance, in the short or long run, to the cold war (not only in Europe and in the underdeveloped areas but in America as well)?

4. What are we defending in the West? Are the intellectual values and freedoms and the political and civil liberties we all affirm inseparable from the West's existing political and social institutions?

5. What has been the effect of the cold war on political thought and speculation in the Western world?

6. What are the objectives of the East and West? Are they ultimately negotiable? If the answer is yes, what are the chances of nuclear disarmament? And if some form of such disarmament were achieved, what would the West's prospects be in the ensuing political, economic and ideological competition? If the answer is no, do you think the advance of Communism can be stopped without nuclear conflict?

7. Do you think the issues at stake in the cold war so decisive as to be worth a nuclear war?

HANNAH ARENDT

Wars and revolutions have thus far determined the physiognomy of the twentieth century; and in contrast to the ideologies which in the last twenty years have more and more degenerated into empty talk, war and revolution still constitute the two major political issues with which we are confronted. In actual fact, the two are interrelated in many ways, and yet for a clarification of these matters they must be kept apart. Historically, wars are among the oldest phenomena of recorded history while revolutions in the modern sense of the word probably did not exist prior to the end of the eighteenth century; they are the most recent of all major political data. Moreover, revolutions are very likely to stay with us into the foreseeable future whereas wars, if they should continue to threaten the existence of mankind and hence remain unjustifiable on rational grounds, might disappear, at least in their present form, even without a concomitant radical transformation of international relations. Hence

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—in anticipation of what I have to say—short of total annihilation and short of a decisive technical development in warfare, the present conflict between the two parts of the world may well be decided by the simple question of which side understands better what is involved and what is at stake in revolution.

In the following I would like to take up, almost at random, a few considerations which all seem to point in the same direction. 1. Obviously, Clausewitz' definition of war as the continuation of politics with other means, however appropriate it might have been for the limited warfare of European nation states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, no longer applies to our situation. This would be true even without nuclear warfare. Since the First World War, we know that no government and no form of government can be expected to survive a defeat in war. A revolutionary change in government—either brought about by the people themselves, as after World War I, or enforced by the victorious powers through the demand of unconditional surrender and the establishment of War Trials—belongs among the most certain consequences of defeat even if we rule out total annihilation or complete chaos. Hence, even prior to nuclear warfare, wars had become politically, though not yet biologically, a matter of life and death.

At the moment when we are so preoccupied with the threat of total annihilation this may appear irrelevant. But it is not at all inconceivable that the next stage of technical advancement may bring us back to a kind of warfare which, though probably still horrible enough, will not be suicidal and, perhaps, not even spell complete annihilation to the defeated. Such a development seems to be within the range of definite possibilities for the simple reason that our present stage of international relationships, still based upon national sovereignty, cannot function without force or the threat of force as the *ultima ratio* of all foreign policy. Whether we like it or not, our present system of foreign affairs makes no sense without war as a last resort; and put before the alternative of either changing this system radically or making some technical discoveries which would bring war back into the political arena, the latter course may well turn out to be much easier and more feasible.

Politically, the point of the matter is that even under changed technical circumstances it is not likely that governments, no matter

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how well established and trusted by its citizens, could survive defeat in war, and such survival must be counted as one of the supreme tests of a government's strength and authority. In other words, under conditions of modern warfare even in its pre-nuclear stage, all governments have lived on borrowed time. Hence the war question—in its most extreme form a question of biological survival—is under any circumstances a question of political survival. Only if we succeed in ruling out war from politics altogether, can we hope to achieve that minimum of stability and permanence of the body politic without which no political life and no political change are possible.

2. Confusion and inadequacy in the discussion of the war question are not surprising. The truth is that a rational debate is impossible as long as we find ourselves caught in a technical stage of development where the means of warfare are such as to exclude their rational use. To try and decide between "better dead than red" and "better red than dead" resembles nothing so much as trying to square the circle. For those who tell us better dead than red, forget that it is a very different matter to risk one's own life for the life and freedom of one's country and for posterity than to risk the very existence of the human species for the same purposes. Moreover, the very formula goes back to antiquity and rests upon the ancient conviction that slaves are not human, that to lose one's freedom means to change one's nature and to become, as it were, dehumanized. None of us, I think, can say that he believes this, least of all those liberals who today try to avail themselves of the old formula. But this is not to say that its reversal has any more to recommend itself. When an old truth ceases to be applicable, it does not become any truer by being stood on its head. Within the framework of realities which we face, the slogan "better red than dead" can mean only the signing of one's own death sentence even before this sentence has been passed and decided upon.

Insofar as the discussion of the war question moves within the closed circle of this preposterous alternative, it is nearly always conducted with a mental reservation on both sides. Those who say "better dead than red" actually think: "The losses may not be as great as some anticipate, our civilization will survive;" while those who say "better red than dead" actually think: "slavery will not be so bad, man will not change his nature, freedom will not vanish from the

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earth forever." What should alarm us in these discussions is the reckless optimism on both sides—on one side, the readiness to count the losses in the tens and hundreds of millions, due in part, perhaps, to a simple failure of imagination but also in part to the frightful and frightening increase of population; and on the other side, the readiness to forget the concentration—and extermination—camps and with them the terrible prospect of freedom vanishing from the earth forever.

The only consoling aspect of this debate seems to lie in that all concerned by now are agreed, not only that war as such stands in need of justification, but that its only possible justification is freedom. This is not a matter of course for a number of reasons. First, freedom is implicitly recognized as the very center, the *raison d'être,* of politics by people who fifteen or twenty years ago would have thought this the utmost of political naiveté, if not a prejudice of the lower middle classes. More importantly, perhaps, justifications of war are at least as old as Roman antiquity, but, contrary to what we are inclined to think, it was not freedom but necessity upon which these justifications usually were based. "Just is a war which is necessary, and hallowed are the arms where no hope exists but in them," said Livy, and by necessity he and his successors throughout the centuries understood all the well-known realities of power politics—such as conquest and expansion, defense of vested interests and preservation of power or conservation of a power equilibrium, etc.—which we today would find quite sufficient to dub a war unjust rather than just, although we know, of course, that they caused the outbreak of most wars in history. Even our present-day notion that aggression is a crime has acquired its practical and theoretical significance only after the First World War had demonstrated the horribly destructive potentialities of warfare under conditions of modern technology.

3. Since the alliance which achieved victory in the Second World War was not strong enough to achieve peace as well, the whole postwar period has been spent by the two major powers in defining their spheres of interest and in jockeying for position in the rapidly changing power structure of a world in turmoil. This period has been called "cold war," and the term is accurate enough if we recall that fear of a major war has determined the actual conduct of foreign affairs and preoccupied public opinion more than any other issue. But in actual

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fact and despite occasional flare-ups, this whole period was much rather a time of cold and uneasy peace, and the reason why I insist on this is not that I am interested in semantics, but that I feel we should not cry wolf too soon.

In other words, what I am afraid of is that a cold war as a real substitute for a hot war may break out one day because it might constitute the only alternative in our present situation, in which we must avoid the threat of total annihilation without knowing how to exclude war as such from the realm of foreign politics. The recent and, let up hope, temporary resumption of nuclear tests has shown how a cold war actually might be conducted. For these tests, unlike those that preceded them, were no longer conducted for the mere sake of the perfection of certain armaments. The tests themselves were meant as an instrument of policy, and they were immediately understood as such. They gave the rather ominous impression of some sort of tentative warfare in which two opposing camps demonstrate to each other the destructiveness of the weapons in their possession. And while it is always possible that this deadly game of ifs and whens may suddenly turn into the real thing, it is not inconceivable that one day a hypothetical victory and a hypothetical defeat could end a war that never exploded into reality.

Is this sheer fantasy? I think not. We were confronted, potentially at least, with this sort of thing at the end of the Second World War, at the very moment when the atomic bomb made its first appearance. At that time, it was considered whether a demonstration of the potency of the new weapon on a deserted island might not be enough to force the Japanese into unconditional surrender. The advantages of this alternative have been argued many times on moral grounds, and I think rightly so. The decisive political argument in its favor was that it would have been much more in line with our actual and professed war aims; surely, what we wished to achieve was unconditional surrender, not extermination or wholesale slaughter of the civilian population.

Hypothetical warfare, it must be admitted, rests on at least two assumptions, both of which are actualities in the relationships between those fully developed powers which could enter into a nuclear war at all. It presupposes, first, a stage of technical development where risks can be calculated with almost perfect precision so that

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very little room is left to chance. Secondly, it presupposes an equality of knowledge and know-how among those who are at war. Thus, a chess game between two equally experienced players will end with one of them conceding defeat or with both agreeing on a stalemate long before all the moves leading to it have been made. The comparison of war with chess is old and has never been true, because the outcome depended to a high degree on chance and on personal factors—such as troop morale and military strategy. Technical warfare has eliminated these factors to such an extent that the old simile may unexpectedly acquire its measure of truth. Or, to put this another way, mutual recognition of the results of a cold war which actually is a war would not imply a change in human nature; the demonstration of the A-bomb would have *forced* the enemy into unconditional surrender, it would not have *persuaded* him. For the experts, the results of the tests could be as conclusive and as compelling evidence for victory and defeat as the battlefield, the conquest of territory, the calculation of losses, etc. have been for the generals on either side in hot wars.

4. The trouble with these reflections is the same as with other discussions of the war question: they are idle, there is little we can do about the whole business one way or another. Even clarifications and attempts at understanding, though always tempting and, perhaps, necessary for the sake of human dignity, can hardly have any practical or even theoretical results. It is precisely a sense of futility which seems to haunt us whenever we approach this matter.

The same is not at all true for the other great issue confronting us, the issue of revolution. This issue can be clarified in the light of past and present experience, and such clarification is not likely to be futile. Its first prerequisite is to recognize and to understand what seems to be so obvious that no one is willing to talk about it, namely, that the inherent aim of revolution has always been freedom and nothing else. The chief obstacles to such an understanding are of course the various ideologies—Capitalism, Socialism, Communism—all of which owe their existence to the nineteenth century and to social and economic conditions which were utterly unlike our own. We are in no position today to foretell what kind of economic system may eventually prove to be the best under the rapidly changing technical and scientific circumstances all over the world. But we can say even

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now that the West has long since ceased to live and to act in accordance with the tenets of capitalism, just as we can see that the chief obstacle to rapid progress in countries ruled by Communist dictatorships is precisely their rigid belief in an ideology. The truth of the matter is that West and East are now engaged in all kinds of economic experiments, and this is as it should be. The freer these experiments are from ideological considerations, the better the results are likely to be; and a competition between different economic systems, in view of the enormous objective problems involved, may eventually turn out to be no less healthy than competition has been within the more restricted framework of national economies. Politically, the only issue at stake between West and East is freedom versus tyranny; and the only political freedom within the economic realm concerns the citizens' right to choose their profession and their place of work.

If the ideologies of the nineteenth century constitute a severe handicap in understanding the dangers and the potentialities of the conflict which divides the world today, the two great revolutions of the eighteenth century—which politically, though not economically, are the origin, the birthplace as it were, of the modern world—may well contain the very principles which are still at stake. Since I cannot possibly hope to argue this matter at all plausibly within the framework of these casual remarks, I shall try and make a few points which seem to me to sum up what came to my mind when I read your questions. First, I must admit that I immediately interpreted or reformulated them until they seemed to be contained in a single question: What are the prospects of the West in the near future, provided nuclear war is avoided and provided, as I believe, revolution will remain the major issue of the century?

My first point would be that every revolution must go through two stages, the stage of liberation—from poverty (which is a liberation from necessity), or from political domination, foreign or domestic (which is a liberation from force)—and the stage of foundation, the constitution of a new body politic or a new form of government. In terms of historical processes, these two belong together, but as political phenomena, they are very different matters and must be kept distinct. My point here is not merely the truism (theoretically interesting enough) that liberation is the prerequisite of freedom and hence

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entirely different from it, but the practical truth that liberation, and especially liberation from necessity, always takes precedence over the building of freedom because of the urgency inherent in necessity. Moreover, liberation, even if successfully achieved, never guarantees the establishment of freedom; it does no more than remove the most obvious obstacle to it.

My second point would be that the whole record of revolutions —if we only knew how to read it—demonstrates beyond doubt that every attempt to abolish poverty, i.e., to solve the so-called social question, with political means is doomed to failure and for this reason leads into terror; terror, on the other hand, sends revolutions to their doom. There has been not a single revolution that ever succeeded in the most important business of revolution, the establishment of a new government for the sake of freedom, except the American Revolution which also was unique in that it was not confronted with mass poverty but conducted, even then, under conditions of an otherwise unknown prosperity.

From this, I would conclude that there would indeed be no great hope that revolution and freedom could ever succeed in the world at large, if we were still living under conditions where scarcity and abundance were beyond the scope of human power. The American Revolution, that is, the experience of foundation on which the republic of the United States rests, would remain what it has been for so long, an exception from an iron rule and an incident of hardly more than local significance. But this is no longer the case. Even though the difficulties standing in the way to a solution of the predicament of mass poverty are still staggering, they are, in principle at least, no longer insurmountable. The advancement of the natural sciences and their technology has opened possibilities which make it very likely that, in a not too distant future, we shall be able to deal with all economic matters on technical and scientific grounds, outside all political considerations. Even today, in the fully developed areas of the West, necessity (and neither political nor humanitarian considerations) is pressing us into all sorts of Point Four programs for the simple reason that our economy produces abundance and superabundance in the same automatic way as the economy of the early modern age produced mass poverty. Our present technical means permit us to fight poverty, and force us to fight superabundance,

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in complete political neutrality; in other words economic factors need not interfere with political developments one way or another. This means for our political future that the wreckage of freedom on the rock of necessity which we have witnessed over and over again since Robespierre's "despotism of liberty" is no longer unavoidable.

Short of war and short of total annihilation, both of which I fear will remain actual dangers, the position of the West in general and of the United States in particular will depend to a considerable extent upon a clear understanding of these two factors involved in revolution: freedom and the conquest of poverty. Technically and economically, the West is in an excellent position to help in the struggle against poverty and misery which is now going on all over the world. If we fail to do our part in this struggle, I am afraid, we shall have occasion to learn by bitter experience how right the men of the French Revolution were when they exclaimed: *"Les malheureux sont la puissance de la terre."* What we seem to fail to understand—in the West in general and in the United States in particular—is the enormous power inherent in wretchedness, once this *malheur* has come out into the open and has made its voice heard in public. This happened for the first time in the French Revolution, and it has happened time and again ever since. In a sense, the fight against poverty, though to be conducted by technical, non-political means, must also be understood as a power struggle, namely, as the struggle against the force of necessity to prepare the way for the forces of freedom. In the United States the failure to understand the political relevance of the social question may have its roots in the history of the country, and especially in the history of the revolution which gave birth to the country's form of government. By the same token, the people of this republic should be in the best possible position to set an example for the whole world—and particularly to those new ethnic groups and peoples who in rapid succession are now rising to nationhood—when it comes to questions of founding new political bodies and establishing lasting institutions of liberty. There are, I think, two chief reasons why we have been found wanting even there, the one being our failure to remember and to articulate conceptually what was at stake in the American Revolution, and this to such an extent that the denial that a revolution ever had taken place here could become, for a long time, a cherished tenet of public

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as well as learned opinion. The second reason for our failure is perhaps even more serious because it obviously concerns a failing of the revolution itself and of the whole ensuing history of the country—i.e., the inability to solve the race question.

Let me point in conclusion to the last two major revolutions—the Hungarian Revolution, so quickly and so brutally crushed by Russia, and the Cuban Revolution which has fallen under Russian influence. After the American Revolution, the Hungarian Revolution was the first I know of in which the question of bread, of poverty, of the order of society, played no role whatsoever; it was entirely political in the sense that the people fought for nothing but freedom, and that their chief concern was the form the new government should assume. None of the participant groups or men—and they included practically the whole population—even thought of undoing the profound social change which the Communist regime had effected in the country. It was precisely the social conditions which everyone took for granted—just as, in vastly different circumstances, the men of the American Revolution had taken for granted the social and economic conditions of the people. Obviously, the Cuban Revolution offers the opposite example; up to now, it has run true to the course of the French Revolution, and for this very reason has fallen so easily under the sway of Bolshevism. If I reflect on our attitude toward these two recent revolutions, it seems to me that whatever we did, or rather did not do, during the Hungarian crisis—right or wrong—was based upon considerations of power politics but not upon a failure to understand what the whole business was all about. In the case of the Cuban Revolution, however, so much closer to us geographically, and yet apparently so much farther removed from our sphere of comprehension, our behavior, I think, demonstrates that we have not understood what it means when a poverty-stricken people in a backward country where corruption has been rampant for a very long time is suddenly released from the obscurity of their farms and houses, permitted to show their misery and invited into the streets of the country's capital they never saw before. The mistake of the Cuban adventure did not lie so much in wrong information as in a conspicuous inability to comprehend the revolutionary spirit, to grasp what it means when *les malheureux* have come into the open and are told: All this is yours, there are

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your streets, and your buildings, and your possessions, and hence your pride. From now on, you will yield the road to no one, you will walk in dignity.

Ultimately and short of catastrophe, the position of the West will depend upon its understanding of revolution. And revolution involves both liberation from necessity so that men may walk in dignity and constitution of a body politic that may permit them to act in freedom.

SIDNEY HOOK

What is at stake in the cold war is not free enterprise but human freedom—the freedom of people to choose their own way of life, the freedom to say "no" to tyranny, the freedom to be different—the same cluster of freedoms which the West defended against Hitler. What is at stake is not Christianity or any other religious faith but the right to believe or disbelieve in accordance with one's conscience. By the West I mean the democratic countries of the world in which, of course, there still exist many injustices and violations of the values of freedom. But so long as the political processes of registering freely given consent remain intact, with sufficient courage and persistence these evils may be removed. At any rate, in almost every respect the state of freedom and public welfare today in the West is far healtheir than when we resisted Hitler.

The difference between the open societies of the West and the Communist dictatorship may be symbolized in many ways. Contrast the fact that England bestows its highest award—the Order of Merit —upon Bertrand Russell, its severest critic, with the degradation of Boris Pasternak, and the failure of a single Soviet writer to speak out publicly in his defense. Or contrast the gentle, almost deferential, treatment in England of Bertrand Russell inciting the public to violation of law with the treatment which would have been meted out to a Soviet Russell—or since it is hard to conceive of a Soviet Russell—with the pitiful, brain-washed creatures who once were men cowering in the courtroom during the Moscow Trials.

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There are some who deny that the differences in freedom between the two worlds is sufficiently great to justify a war of defense against Communist aggression. But the reason they give indicates clearly that they are not really concerned with freedom at all in the present context of affairs. They say—falsely, I believe—that nuclear war in all probability will destroy mankind. If this were so, it would be true even if the West were ideally or completely free and had realized the dreams of the great Utopians. No matter how free the West, on this reckoning it would be destroyed. Their talk, therefore, about the West not being free enough to justify a war of defence is irrelevant—if not insincere—since on their view nothing is worth a nuclear war which would threaten universal destruction. Freedom is *our* concern, not theirs. When they equate the cultures of the free and Communist societies or minimize their differences, they are mainly seeking to demoralize the will of the free world to resist Communist aggression.

The same argument applies to those who say that since Stalin, the Dour, has been replaced by Khrushchev, the Jolly, the consequences of a Communist victory are a lesser evil than the dangers of a holocaust. For the latter is the greatest of all evils. If this is true, then what is the point of reminding us that Stalin and Stalinism (they are not the same) are dead? Would they resist Communist aggression if Stalin were alive and threatened us with nuclear rockets? Obviously not.

For reasons which I have detailed at length in my debates with Bertrand Russell in *The New Leader,* and in a recent discussion in *Commentary,* I am convinced that there will be no nuclear war, if the free world is prepared to defend itself with nuclear weapons. Further, it seems to me criminal folly to say, as some unilateralists have said, that if the Soviet Union refuses to accept reasonable controls over disarmament, then the West should disarm unilaterally even if this means the universal sway of Communism and all its evils. For such a position can only encourage the Kremlin to be intransigeant in its unreasonableness—and we have seen how unreasonable and defiant of world opinion it can be!—and overrun the free world. Even this would not be a guarantee of survival. For the Chinese Communists are not likely to be as pacific towards the Kremlin, if and when they have nuclear weapons, as the West has

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been. The Western World, unilateralists and all, may end up *both* Red and Dead.

The view that our alternatives are limited to nuclear war or surrender is patently absurd. Our present condition is proof of the absurdity. The balance of terror may continue for some time until controlled multilateral disarmament is introduced. The necessity of controls in disarmament has been reinforced by recent evidence of Soviet duplicity—the preparation for tests at a time when the Kremlin professed to be abiding by its pledge of a moratorium. It is sometimes said that the Kremlin fears aggression on the part of the West, especially the United States, just as much as the West fears Soviet aggression. I do not believe this to be true in the least although Soviet propaganda may have succeeded in convincing some that this is so. Every move the West has made vis-a-vis the Soviet Union since the end of the Second World War has been defensive, and when it had a monopoly of atomic weapons, instead of using them as threats to impose its will on the Kremlin, as Bertrand Russell urged, it offered to surrender this monopoly to an international organization. The Soviet Union alone among the great powers rejected the proposal.

It is sometimes said that the West is fearful of disarming not so much because it distrusts Soviet *bona fides* but because it shrinks from peaceful competition on the ideological, economic, and social plane. I can find no warrant for this statement. Why should we fear such competition? Is the level of cultural freedom and social welfare so high in Communist countries that it would lead the peoples of the free world voluntarily to abandon their political liberties and entrust their destinies to a Communist dictatorship? The contrary seems to me to be true. It is the Kremlin which fears peaceful ideological, economic and cultural competition. Why otherwise should it spends such vast sums jamming the radio broadcasts of the free world? Why should it pen its peoples behind barbed wired walls as if they were so much cattle? Whatever the truth of the charge either way, I think it would be a blessing if such competition could be substituted for the present competition in armament either by way of multilateral disarmament or by stable arms control. The money spent on armament could go towards removing the pockets of poverty in our own country, and economic and educational aid to

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countries less fortunate than our own. Even under present conditions we should do much more along these lines.

The free world is handicapped in its struggle for survival by its own institutions, which, of course, is no reason for curbing them but rather for using them with greater intelligence. On the one hand, there are the noisy cultural vigilantes and political Neanderthals who confuse counsel and make more difficult the courageous grappling with the problem of how to preserve peace. On the *domestic* front they do not understand that the chief problem is not Communism but segregation, and racialism and the ugly phenomena connected with it. For all their talks about freedom, they do not see the hypocrisy of encouraging Freedom Fighters against Communism abroad and attacking Freedom Riders at home. On the other hand, there are the assorted groups of pacifists, unilateralists, and indifferentists who are so intent on peace that they would sacrifice our freedom for it, and whose propaganda by encouraging Khrushchev to think that his adventures may not be resisted, actually increases the danger of war. Nonetheless both groups can be rendered uninfluential by an aroused and intelligent public opinion.

Those who make a fetish of free enterprise or capitalism are also obstacles in the struggle for the survival of a free culture. They not only misunderstand the actual nature of our mixed economy, but even more important the economic needs of other regions of the world which cannot be met except by some form of socialized economy. If freedom comes first, and we are prepared to go down fighting for it, then we cannot permit the quest for private profit to have any influence on our foreign policy. This applies as much to those who would like to appease Communist countries in order to do profitable business with them as to those who would like the government to protect their investments against socialization abroad. A democratic socialist regime has in the long run a much better chance of withstanding Communist subversion or a Communist coup than a reactionary regime like that of a Trujillo or a Franco.

There are some unilateralists who believe that if the Communists take over a free country which has disarmed itself, they will be overthrown by the resistance movement even if there were no military invasion. They overlook three things. First, whatever resistance movement there was in the past depended upon the ex-

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istence of countries which either were still free or still hostile to Hitler. Second, a Communist dictatorship organizes its own underground the better to destroy it. Third, a Communist government with a monopoly of nuclear weapons capable of destroying any region on earth could deliver an ultimatum demanding that the entire resistance movement be turned over to it on pain of immediate destruction of the community which harbored it. The very considerations which led unilateralists and pacifists to urge us to disarm originally would militate against continuation of resistance. One can hear the argument in advance. Since no one can survive refusal of the ultimatum, there is no sense to resistance. To be sure, the underground fighters are saints and heroes, and it is unpleasant to think of their fate in the hands of the Communist *gauleiters*. But they will die anyhow if Khrushchev unlooses his rockets. They should really surrender themselves to save the innocent women and children who want to live and have no quarrel with the Kremlin. That would be true heroism!

It is sometimes asserted that any comparison between the past and present is illegitimate because our situation is absolutely unique. It is one in which all life and civilization may be destroyed in a nuclear conflict. Therefore it is senseless to go down fighting for any ideal, since all ideals, are meaningless unless we can be certain that there will be survivors. The very meaning of "right and wrong," "good and bad" in the absence of survivors becomes utterly vacuous. Indeed, we are lectured that those who use such terms in these extreme situations are either striking a pose or are demented, victims of a silly rhetoric.

It would require a book to do justice to the fallacies of this position. I am confident that an intelligent and courageous policy on the part of the free world will enable us to avoid nuclear war. If it is forced on us it is the sheerest dogmatism to predict that all life and civilization will be destroyed. What will happen will to a large extent depend upon what we do or leave undone. Whatever the costs, they will be tragic. But mankind has often paid a heavy cost in defence of freedom. The cost of submission to tyranny is sometimes equally high. Six million Jews went to their death submissively without humanizing their tormentors. The Jews who went down fighting in the Warsaw Ghetto in a desperate resistance died

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more nobly. I therefore deny that our situation today is absolutely unique, permitting no comparisons with the past.

It seems to me to be a monstrous doctrine to believe that in any situation unless we are certain there will be survivors of an action, it is meaningless to employ the terms "right" or "wrong," "good" or "bad." As well say that when it appears that all hands are lost, any bestial conduct is permitted in the rush to the life boats. On this view, the probable end of life on the planet makes all moral judgment meaningless.

Not only is this position morally untenable, it is psychologically false if it implies that those who have resisted great historical evils at the cost of their lives have done so with the certainty that there would be survivors either here or in the hereafter. Those who tell us that the nuclear age has destroyed the vocabulary of political and moral judgment are actually narrowing our choice in moments of fateful decision. Since no rational moral judgment is possible, they are suggesting that surrender is the instinctively justified animal reaction. Sometimes they actually assert that life under *any* conditions, survival at *any* moral cost, is better than non-existence. They are not always consistent, however, because they also tell us, as an argument *against* a nuclear defence, that: "The survivors will envy the dead."

The difficulty with the position of absolute pacifism is that it makes the pacifist morally responsible for the evils which an intelligent use of force may sometimes prevent. The individual who refuses to use violence against an aggressor when that is the only means which can prevent the torture and execution of the innocent is either less than man or more. He has transcended the plane of human morality. But he is at least consistent. The unilateralist, however, who is not a pacifist seems to me to be both muddleheaded and immoral —muddleheaded because were his policy to prevail in all liklihood it would bring about what he fears; immoral because he is prepared to sacrifice every decent human value before the rocket brandishing threats of the Kremlin.

It is even more difficult to understand those who assert, at one and the same time, that a nuclear defence against Communist nuclear aggression is impermissable but that if Hitler had developed comparable weapons, resistance against him would have been justifiable. They sometimes speak of the war against Hitler as if it were the

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only just war in history. But surely any reasonable grounds offered for believing the war against Hitler just would apply to some other wars, too. If it is admitted that resistance against Hitler and other tyrants was justified why should resistance against Communism be considered wicked, once we cease the macabre death mongering which exaggerates all dangers beyond measure. Budapest was as bad as Warsaw; the Soviet concentration camps hardly better than the Nazi camps—for the millions who perished there. Is it the point that those who fought against Hitler expected the free world to survive while there can be no such expectation today? There is, as we have seen, reason to doubt this. But even so, if those who died in the struggle against Fascism could have foreseen that the survivors were going to capitulate to a brutal despotism in order to enjoy whatever life their tyrants permitted them in exchange for their freedom and human dignity—why should they have fought? No one wants to be vaporized. All of us tend to cling to life. If, however, fear of a nuclear holocaust in consequence of resistance to aggression, justifies capitulation, those who died no less horrible deaths resisting Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and other dictators could very well ask: Why were *we* expected to die fighting evils *you* find perfectly tolerable to live under? To respond to this with talk about the justice of the war against Hitler and at the same time to urge capitulation to the Kremlin is to mock the dead. If survival on any terms is the real desideratum of those who talk this way, what possible difference can it make to their position whether a war is just or unjust?

I conclude with a few observations which seem to me to be warranted by our knowledge of history, psychology, and above all by our common sense. The Communists are not devils but fellow mortals who believe that they are the chosen instruments of the dialectic of history to bring salvation to all men on earth no matter how many they kill in the process. They do *not* want war because they believe they can triumph without one. And indeed, recent history and the many fools in the West are on their side. They will never initiate a war unless convinced in advance that they will win an easy victory. They are unsure of the loyalty of their own people, since they do not grant them freedom of choice, and are especially unsure of the loyalty of the nations they hold captive. There will therefore be no all-out war so long as the free world has the strength and the

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will to resist Communist aggression. Communists, however, will use all other means to bring us down, subversion, economic competition, corruption, and diplomatic offensives to disrupt the unity of the NATO powers. If we meet these challenges in a spirit of reciprocity and carry the ideological offensive to them, we need have no fear of the outcome. Their stupidity (opposition to the Marshall Plan, the treatment of Tito, Pasternak, the brutal scorn of world opinion, Khrushchev at the U.N. etc,) is on our side. The very existence of a strong, free, and open society outside the borders of the Soviet Union will always be a discomfort to the Soviet regime and a source of infection to those of its people who have not lost their love of freedom. Since we have renounced preventive war as a means of defence, which is as it should be, our best hope is that in time the people of the Communist world themselves will win their freedom, and a viable world community be established. Until then, ours can only be militairly a holding action—as we strengthen democratic society both for our own sakes and for the sake of men everywhere and find ways to bring the message of freedom to the minds and hearts of all the peoples of the world.

IRVING HOWE

This is my third or fourth *PR* symposium, and each time I wonder what use there can be in compressing into a few hundred words my responses to questions that would require many pages to answer decently. The purpose of such symposia, however, is not to have anyone develop ideas in depth; it is to register shifts of intellectual opinion and temper. So, with a kind of comic despair at the hopelessness of the attempt, here are a few remarks:

1) What can one mean by winning or losing the cold war? It is not as if so complex an historical development were undertaken by plan or intent, with a set of clear goals that would allow us to measure the extent to which they have been realized. The cold war began as a result of a great many interlocking causes, such as national interests asserted and threatened, imperial ambitions among

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the victors in the last war, ideological conflicts both profound and factitious, etc. The struggle between the two sides will continue, I think, through the lifetime of everyone reading these lines, though the forms it will take are impossible to predict.

If the aim of the West was to destroy the Communist societies, then the cold war has been lost. It begins to seem that the Communist dictatorship, like any other kind of political system resting on an industrialized economy, can achieve some measure of internal stability. How long this stability will last no one can say with assurance; but Russian Communism, apparently past the worst ordeals of industrialization and no longer subject to the crises produced by Stalinist terrorism, is reaching a point of development and inner modification somewhat like that of capitalism in the advanced Western countries.

To say this is not, of course to approve of or be reconciled to the Communist regime. Stabilization does not necessarily imply a good society or a gradual evolution toward democracy, as the theorists of inevitable progress suppose. It merely signifies that we had better expect to face the Communist threat for a long time, relying not upon "inherent" upheavals of the historic process but upon our own intelligence and radical powers of renewal to meet that threat. I believe, or at least hope, that even in a society with a rising standard of living the problem of dictatorship cannot be long evaded; I expect that this will bring severe conflicts within Russia; but these conflicts will have to be endured and worked out by those living under the dictatorship, for there is no longer any possibility, as there was never any desirability, of external intervention.

If the Western aim was to "roll back" Russian might in Europe, then the cold war has been lost. Given the world in which we live—"I too dislike it"—nothing short of atomic war can now remove the hold of Russia upon its satellites, and no sane person can propose to launch such a war. In the present epoch there is emerging a new kind of imperialism, largely ideological in nature, which seems likely to be as persistent and pernicious as the older kinds, and quite as great a possible incitement to war as the arms race.

If the Western aim was to check Communist expansion in Asia or Africa, then the issue remains in doubt, though the prospects are grey. The political *appeal* of Communism in some of the Asian coun-

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tries seems to have declined, yet its political *power* remains considerable. The reasons for this power are familiar: Communism provides deracinated intellectuals with an ideology through which to release their ambition, distress, ideals, envy and need for a synthetic world-outlook; it gives a technic of struggle to nationalist movements which in their own right have little more than a grievance and a mystique; it capitalizes on the deep hostility toward the white man; it carries itself with the posture of victory; and it seems to offer, as in some desperately inhumane and probably inefficient way it does offer, a quick road to industrialization.

Can all this be countered by the West, even a West led by democratic radicals? I doubt it. We must resign ourselves to the likelihood that the *ressentiment* of the underdeveloped countries, a development that would have occurred if there were not a single Communist on the globe, will have to run its course and in doing so will find a ready partner in the Communist movement: a model of success, a source of language, a pattern of economics.

Still, much could be done to minimize the painfulness of this event and to enable the political élites of the underdeveloped countries to hasten their intellectual independence. The problem goes far deeper than providing more economic aid—much as that is needed—or even greater "understanding." For one thing, the West needs the kind of political leaders it now totally lacks in all of its parties, conservative, liberal and socialist: men who can grasp something of the psychology of desperation and the dynamic of romanticism. For another, if the West is to become a source of attraction for the underdeveloped countries and regain some political charisma in the world struggle, it needs a sharply radical turn in its own social life. Meanwhile, the best we can hope for is larger quantities of economic aid to those countries like India where there is a solid democratic tradition, and a diplomacy clever enough to realize that in some countries and at certain historical moments a "neutralism" short of total dependence on Russia constitutes a piece of good fortune.

If the aim of the West was to prevent Europe from succumbing to Communist domination, then the Cold War has probably been won. In the West European countries the Communist parties may still get almost as many votes as they did ten years ago, but they have lost in élan, youthfulness, militancy and the power to cripple national

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existence. Despite the Berlin crisis, the long-range trend in Europe is toward stabilization of the current political divisions, and this implies a serious check to the expansionist ambitions of Communism. The socio-economic recovery of Western Europe is a major and, on the whole, a hopeful fact of the post-war years: it means that in a number of countries with the highest level of political culture there remain opportunities for experiment and initiative, even if these are not being exploited at the moment.

2) Obviously it is desirable that the U.S. reorient its policies to help movements of social reform, especially in the underdeveloped countries. But this is not quite so easy as many liberals suppose. Far more is needed than money, good will or even a new set of "images" for America abroad. The Kennedy administration has been unimpressive in this respect, as in so many others, and not because some of its technical projects (e.g., Latin America) are unworthy of support but because it has not thought out the implications, or shown a willingness to face the risks, of presenting a new "image" to the world.

A new image requires a new substance, and a new substance means first of all a sharp turn leftward *at home*. One reason the New Deal aroused strong feelings throughout the world was that Roosevelt, despite his frequent opportunism, was at several crucial points ready to fight against his domestic opponents. He aligned himself with, or took advantage of, significant mass movements and sentiments, so that the dynamism of American political life in the thirties came to seem an earnest of our intentions. By contrast, Kennedy works almost entirely through a slick bureaucratic style: he is committed to the politics of caution and compromise. One trouble with his administration is that it is too damned clever, too clever in the manner of Irish ward politics and too clever in the manner of Harvard intellectual parties. It fails to understand that there are times when a good hard fight, even if momentarily lost, is of greater political and educative value than brilliant but confusing maneuvers. (Perhaps, however, it doesn't see much to fight about . . .) It proposes to create political images of America through a rhetoric with little risk: no one is fooled, nor much impressed. At home all this approach does is to incite the far right just enough to give it a new confidence and aggression. In foreign policy there have been some sensible achievements, apart from the Cuban disaster, but these tend

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to lose their meaning and impact if they are not articulated in the context of a full-scale political position.

There are other, more complex difficulties. "Identify," you say, "with the movements and leaders of change throughout the world"—but this cannot mean the same thing now that it might have fifteen years ago. We are paying the price for an immediate past of sluggishness, cowardice and reaction. A liberal foreign policy in 1947 or 1952 might have had notable consequences, while the apparently same policy transferred to 1962 might cause hardly a ripple. The intentions could be as good, the terms of application the same; but the context has changed, usually for the worse. Too many things have settled in the underdeveloped countries, and partly this is due to the conduct of both Russia and the U.S., partly to the predictable weaknesses of the leaders of the new nations. Any policy of trying to "identify with the movements and leaders of change throughout the world" must therefore be more radical and even desperate than it would have had to be ten or fifteen years ago, and that is something the administration does not care to face. In all fairness it should be added that the possibilities for such a policy have seriously narrowed: there are a number of countries in which one can hardly find any "movements and leaders of change." And what could have been done in and/or for Indochina, Algeria and Cuba some years ago can no longer be done today, just as what might still be done in Latin America will be impossible fifteen years from now. Prescriptions depend not merely on a general diagnosis but also on exact observation of the stage the illness has reached.

The domestic situation is less favorable than in the late forties for a turn toward an aggressively liberal foreign policy. The American people have been systematically lied to about the realities of world politics; there is a growing cynicism about the value of foreign aid; and a new articulate minority, the extreme right-wing which is the only political movement in America with crusading spirit and energy, stands ready to fight any signs of generosity in foreign affairs. To cope with all this, we would have to have an administration prepared to educate, proselytize and do harsh political battle: that is, prepared to face immediate losses in behalf of long-range goals.

Is a genuinely liberal turn possible? Yes. Likely? No. I am impatient with half-baked Marxists who "deduce" the impossibility of a

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major shift in foreign policy from the fact that capitalism still prevails in this country; experience has shown that under sufficient pressure and need social systems can display unprecedented flexibility and break past their earlier limits of response. But I suspect those critics are right who say that the present administration, in its suave "pragmatism" and canny politicking, will not have the courage to act.

The liberals too need the courage of revaluation. If the United States were to become a nation supporting "movements and leaders of change," then all the usual endorsements of non-intervention would have to be reconsidered. To favor any kind of intervention in regard to, say, a rightist dictatorship in the Dominican Republic undercuts the ground of a principled opposition to intervention in regard to a "leftist" dictatorship in Cuba. Now the Cuban invasion and the role of the U.S. in that fiasco were ghastly blunders, stupid and reactionary; they showed how deeply entrenched were the forces of the political right in Washington, quite apart from any change of administration. Yet unless one believes that the Castro dictatorship deserves moral or political support, a point of view favoring help to "movements and leaders of change" in, say, Paraguay or Haiti forces one to surrender any principled opposition to a similar policy in Cuba. It then becomes, crucially, a matter of the political wisdom and nature of the intervention.

3) I am committed to the "position" of democratic socialism, that is, to the idea of a society in which the values of democratic participation and fraternity will have suffused its major economic and political institutions. To say this, however, is to speak in terms of a large historical span extending a century into the past and perhaps a century into the future. One must in honesty admit that such a commitment does not necessarily signify that "we" have answers to particular problems better than those advanced by other people. Between the historic "position" and particular proposals of socialists there is some connection, of course, but not necessarily a clear or direct one.

The "position" of democratic socialism remains for me a valid and inspiriting one, provided it be thought of not as a series of fixed ideological principles but as an ethical and historical perspective animated by a vision of humaneness and devoted to a problematic

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mode of thought in which its own future is a central problem. To have this "position" does not, alas, provide one with automatic answers to problems of the cold war, disarmament, stopping Communism, nationalizing industry etc., any more than an acceptance of the Sermon on the Mount necessarily provides answers to specific moral problems. Unfortunately, democratic socialism is today weak in regard to the problems of the moment, first because it is caught up in a deep and absorbing crisis of intellectual "position," second because in many countries it has declined into little more than an agency of liberal reform, and third because some of our immediate problems do not permit quick or complete solutions by anyone.

On a world scale the socialist movement may have exhausted its option during the early years of the century, so that its unfinished tasks will now have to be taken up by some new agency. It is possible that no great historical movement gets a second chance, and if so, that may explain the loss of élan, the decline of charisma, from which the socialist parties suffer, and which severely limit their capacity to affect the course of the cold war.

The right wing of socialism displays intelligence and skill, in some countries, at working out limited social improvements, but it has virtually ceased to pretend that it speaks in the name of a major historical transformation. The left wing wishes to recapture the spirit of transcendence which characterized socialism in its early days, yet cannot find specific political proposals toward that end which would also be relevant to the conditions of mid-twentieth century society. Behind these difficulties lies a deeper and more pervasive intellectual crisis. Serious partisans of democratic socialism are troubled by the fact that there seems to be a dissociation, or at least there is no longer an assured connection, between their animating sentiments and their formulated program. They can no longer take it for granted that the one presupposes the other, and in such a crisis it is hard to step forward with a voice of certainty. Nevertheless, the perspective of democratic socialism remains a central hope in the increasingly collectivist world in which we live, the one way of escaping the insufferable choice between capitalism and Communism. In that fundamental sense, it is sure to be profoundly important during the years ahead, as a permanent possibility of escape from the dilemmas of the cold war; but at any given moment,

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unfortunately, this will not assure it of adequate power to shape the actual course of events.

6) There are three attitudes toward the cold war that I would reject:

the uncompromising "anti-Communist crusade" which would subordinate every social interest and intellectual divergence to Western power and which, if pushed to its logical conclusion, may well lead to nuclear war;

the campaign for unilateral disarmament which bases itself on moral absolutes and barely troubles to estimate the power consequences that might follow from an adoption of its proposals;

the sociological analysis which foresees a convergence between East and West in the direction of a highly bureaucratic and authoritarian society, so that, in the name of an historical possibility that is admittedly a real one, it fails to take into account, or act upon, the life-and-death differences between the Communist dictatorships, softened as they may be, and the Western democracies, marred as they may be.

My sense of it is that radical intellectuals must try to maintain a point of view which acknowledges the stake they have in preserving Western democracy while exercising a maximum of political independence. This means that one cannot pretend to be neutral or indifferent in regard to the world struggle. I want, for example, to see a policy which prevents Berlin from succumbing to Communist encirclement while yet avoiding nuclear war. Between the West and "ourselves" there is, not a full identity of interest, but a sharing of certain limited goals, the realization of which requires us to depend upon Western power and also to put forward a variety of radical proposals. Thus, within this complex perspective, I would propose that, no matter what other nations do, the United States refrain from a resumption of nuclear testing—that seems to me both a moral obligation and a way of regaining the political initiative from the Communists. I would also be inclined to support proposals for "phased" disarmament by the West as a means of trying to break the arms deadlock.

The conflict between East and West is almost certain to continue for a long time. What we can try to do is to affect Western policy toward a stress upon progressive economic and political ends,

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rather than dangerous displays of military strength. This means a policy of tacking and veering, of trying to contain the Communist thrust while avoiding nuclear war, of gaining time for new and promising developments in both camps, and of caring not so much for a total victory by the West as for a decisive check to the expansion of the East.

7) I have no patience or sympathy with those who cry "better red than dead" and those who cry "better dead than red." It is conceivable that the extreme choice—nuclear war or surrender to Communism—may have to be made. But it is pointless now to make the choice as a speculative anticipation, when there still remain a good many courses of action that can help us avoid that terrible choice. We should try to use our wits and keep our nerve, and if we do, there is a chance to break past the intolerable dilemma this question poses.

H. STUART HUGHES

In the quarter century that has passed since I came to ideological awareness, I have traversed five successive phases in trying to cope with Soviet and Communist behavior. During the mid-thirties I endorsed the Popular Front idea. After that came four years of growing animosity, starting around 1937, when people like myself awoke to the horror of the great purge, and punctuated by the catastrophe in Spain, the Nazi-Soviet pact, and the winter war in Finland, until in 1941 the German invasion of Russia at length cast the Soviet Union in a more attractive role. The third phase was one of renewed Popular Front—the left-ideological counterpart to the military alliance against Hitler—which was already breaking up in the weeks between the Yalta conference and the end of the European conflict and which had totally expired by 1948. There followed the years of cold war hostility until the death of Stalin in 1953, and, finally, the present phase, whose ultimate outlines are necessarily unclear, but whose salient characteristics derive from the mitigation of authoritarian rule within the Soviet Union itself, the emergence of China and the newly-liberated nations of

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Asia and Africa, and, most pervasively, the thermonuclear balance of terror between the Communist and the Western worlds.

During all these phases, I have never remotely thought of becoming a Communist. My sympathies have mostly been with democratic socialism—although I have been subject to disconcerting attacks of conservative regression—and I have only infrequently found myself saying something that happened to be the current Communist line. At the same time I have never been a strenuous anti-Communist; even in the periods when I saw the rulers of the Soviet Union pursuing a particularly brutal policy—in the late 1930's and again in the last years of Stalin's tyranny—I have found it difficult to concentrate my energies against them. I think this is because I have never felt that opposition to Communism was the main matter at hand; it was always secondary to some greater battle, and one in which we might well need the Communists as allies. In the first three phases of my ideological journey, the enemy was Nazism, which I continue to regard as almost wholly evil, as opposed to Communism, in which I discover some potentiality for good. More recently, the enemy has been the threat of thermonuclear war itself, and I find it difficult to imagine how one could regard the points at issue between ourselves and the Soviet Union as transcending our common interest in preventing a catastrophe beyond repair.

Specifically, I differ with the militant critics of Communism in not regarding the system as all of a piece. I think its economic practices can be distinguished from its terrorist features—that the former are tolerable (and sometimes even admirable) while the latter are not. I also believe that the system as a whole is capable of evolving in a liberal direction and that under Khrushchev such an evolution has in fact been in progress. Admittedly it has been confined to Europe and it has several times been interrupted or reversed, but the net effect over the past eight years has been a cumulative shift toward a more bearable life. In this change, I think, lies the still dim but ever more discernible hope for humanity in the next half century. It is obviously a change that we should welcome and encourage. And one way of encouraging it is to refrain from needling the Soviet Union or its representatives on their day-to-day authoritarian routines—to restrict our condemnation to the most notorious incidents, like the repression of the Hungarian revolt in 1956, in which

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a wholesale violation of liberty has set back the entire process of Communist evolution toward more humane behavior.

I believe, then, that we have no quarrel with Communism as an economic system. I contend that if our government publicly proclaimed such an attitude—if we made it perfectly clear both to the American people and to national leaders overseas that considerations of economic ideology would no longer influence United States policy —if we gave assurance to everyone that collectivism, wherever and however pursued, was quite acceptable to us—the conduct of our foreign relations would be enormously simplified. By discarding what is peripheral and dispensable in our quarrel with Communism, we should be able to focus more precisely on what we find profoundly objectionable in the Communist regimes. By narrowing the points at issue, we should have clarified them: we should be in a position to distinguish—as we cannot do now—the matters on which we are ready to negotiate and compromise from those on which we must insist at all costs.

As an economic system, Communism is a perfectly respectable way of doing things. There is no need to get upset or morally indignant about it. We are called on to do no more than to apply to it the criteria by which we judge our own economic performance—efficiency and the advancement of welfare, public and private. These goals may be in conflict (we are more and more realizing how frequently in our own country they are), but at least we agree with the Communists that they are the goals to be pursued. And we are also coming to the realization that on the grounds of *public* welfare our performance has been far from perfect. Similarly, the leaders of the Soviet Union have become more frank about conceding that in the sector of *private* consumption their record is highly unsatisfactory. The elements of a dispassionate (and even friendly?) debate on the virtues of the two competing economic systems are already at hand.

This debate would not be a mere repetition of the century-old contention between the merits of capitalism and those of socialism. For neither of the protagonists is quite what it used to be. As the capitalism of the West has become less capitalist, so collectivist doctrines and practices have grown less socialist. The traditional Social-

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ism or Social Democracy of Europe has lost its self-confidence and its moral drive: its official leaders have become scarcely distinguishable from their "bourgeois" opponents. Perhaps for that reason they have found few imitators in the non-European world. Beyond Europe's shores what remains of Socialism's old message is little more than a few practical precepts for collectivist action. Their tone has ceased to be evangelical—it has become managerial and businesslike. In this sense the socialism or quasi-socialism of the newly-liberated countries owes far more to Soviet or Yugoslav experience than it does to that of European Social Democracy. In tone and emphasis the collectivism of the underdeveloped world bears the Moscow stamp.

That means that the United States suffers under a grave handicap in dealing with formerly colonial areas. I am convinced that if our society at home were more collectivist, we would find less difficulty in understanding the aspirations of newly-liberated peoples. Failing that, we could at least make it clear that we would accept with equanimity the nationalization of American enterprises overseas. And by so doing we would have put ourselves in a far better position to express our point of view on violations of basic human rights (which, most people now agree, do not include a right to hold large property). We would no longer be vulnerable to the old accusation of a special hypocrisy inherent in Anglo-Saxon speech. The disinterestedness of our concern for individual human beings suffering oppression would be more apparent once it could no longer be dismissed as a smoke screen for economic egoism.

Thus we should have reduced our quarrel with the Soviet Union to its essentials—our opposition to Communism's tyranny over the mind of man. And I mean this in the widest sense. I mean terror and censorship, arbitrary imprisonment and forced labor, the falsification of history and barefaced lying in international assemblies—every aspect of conduct and policy that is deceitful and inhumane.

But where does this leave us in the cold war? Is it really possible to choose to oppose the Russians in one sphere of action, and to refrain from doing so in another? Aren't we engaged in a struggle for national and cultural survival, in which such distinctions may dangerously weaken our resolve?

I confess that I find questions like these hard to answer. I

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am puzzled as to how to estimate the Soviet Union's present aims. I agree wholly neither with those who argue that it is no longer an expansionist power nor with the more prevalent view that the Communist rulers of Russia have always and forever aspired to world domination.

I think it undeniable that the Soviet Union is currently "winning" the cold war. For the past four years—since the launching of their Sputnik—the Russians have given the impression that they are ahead of us in military power and world influence. (Whether this is actually true is less important than the fact that most people, particularly in Asia and Africa, seem to think it true.) In the major crises of the past year—Laos, Cuba, Berlin—the Soviet Union has scored more points than we have. In this sense, I agree with those in our own country who are currently sounding the alarm.

I differ with them, however, in taking a less national and power-political view of the matter. The point, I believe, is not to preserve America's position as first among the powers; it is to save the free and humane values of the West as a whole. In this second respect, the situation may be somewhat less dangerous. I am quite ready to grant that Khrushchev and his colleagues would like to humiliate and down-grade the United States as a great power. I am less convinced that they intend to "enslave" us and our ideological associates in Europe and the Commonwealth.

Here the growing ideological rift between Russia and China is of crucial importance. It means that Soviet Communism is being outflanked on the left—that it is being pushed toward the "center" of the international political alignment. I think it probable that in the next few years most of the world's Communist parties will repeat this cleavage: in nearly every country there will emerge a "hard," revolutionary faction loyal to Peiping as opposed to the "moderates" who will look to Moscow for guidance. The monolithic character of international Communism is already breaking down: in the coming decade it will doubtless disintegrate still further.

The dispute with the Chinese has both reflected and intensified the Russian people's evolution toward attitudes similar to our own. Soviet society is becoming more humane and more satisfied; the long-promised consumers' paradise is taking on reality at last. And with the first tokens of affluence the Russians are acquiring a stake

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in the established order—more particularly in the preservation of peace. Similarly in its international actions, the Soviet Union is beginning to behave like a "have" power. Even when it sounds most threatening—as over Berlin—its real purpose may be more conservative than appears on the surface. In precipitating the Berlin crisis, I believe, Khrushchev was not intending to upset the international equilibrium; he was aiming to freeze the status quo of a divided Germany and a divided Europe.

If only we can preserve the peace for a few more years, the United States and the Soviet Union may come to recognize the interests and aspirations they have in common. Both in theory believe in human equality; both aim at the elimination of want; both honor production and scoff at the idler; both define the good life in terms of peace and security. I have heard that at Moscow University the American students find a warmer welcome than the Chinese. I am not surprised. For in contrast to the desperation and ruthlessness of Communism in China, its Soviet counterpart is evolving toward values that resemble ours. Faced with the new threat to their left, the Russians are edging their way to a Communist "liberalism" which may finally transform co-existence from a propaganda slogan into a living reality. In that case, there might emerge a new type of Popular Front mentality, arising out of a common desire for peace on both sides of the conventional ideological frontier. And in such a perspective the Popular Fronts of a quarter century ago—which I have always refused to regard as mistaken—would finally figure as what they hoped to be at the time, the ideological prerequisites for the twentieth-century humanism of a collectivist society.

STANLEY KUNITZ

The cold war cannot be won by either East or West; it can only be lost, and precisely because so much sovereign pride and honor and energy are invested in it. Since neither side can afford to concede defeat, those who clamor for unconditional victory are actually insisting that we push to catastrophe. What keeps the cold

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war cold is that it is being waged on fairly even terms; the moment when a decisive advantage is gained is the very moment when it will be converted, by the side that refuses humiliation, into a hot war.

I do not subscribe to a Manichean view of world politics. Although I am often repelled and sometimes outraged by Soviet policy and practice, my assumption is that the Communist State is neither hopelessly irrational nor irretrievably committed to evil. How can those who argue otherwise have any faith whatever in the possibility of a peaceful settlement of our differences? Nothing in the historic situation supports the contention that we are engaged in a cosmic struggle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. The state is a changing system whose only constant is self-interest. From the spectacular reshuffling of partners after World War II we should have learned that neither friends nor enemies wear permanent labels. To be sure, we have ideological differences with the USSR, but let us keep in mind that when it has seemed to our advantage, as in our relationship with Spain and Portugal and certain Latin-American dictatorships, we have been ready to discount or ignore the differences. Both East and West tend to overstress their ideological differences in an effort to provide a quasi-religious sanction for their traditional power struggle—outmoded now in the sense that it can no longer be fought to a decision within the comparative security of a closed war.

The real revolution in the affairs of the great powers is that war has become a total weapon no longer suitable for the achievement of limited ends. Nations that rattle rockets these days do so in the persuasion that since war has become unthinkable they can resort with impunity to the threat of war. The risk, which is compounded daily, lies in the probability that the illusion will be detonated into reality as the result of accident, miscalculation, or sheer hysteria. Faced with this predicament, the part of statesmanship is to play firmly for time while striving for a relaxation of tensions. Americans should welcome the stabilization of the Russian economy, for only then will its more repressive and aggressive features be ameliorated. If we can refrain from blowing each other to bits in the near future, it is by no means preposterous to anticipate a gradual rapprochement leading to an alliance by the end of the century that will be posed as a counterweight to the massive force of China.

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At this stage I doubt that either East or West is seriously interested in disarmament. The grandiose proposals and counter-proposals are intended as window-dressing or propaganda, and the moment an offer is seen to be acceptable it is modified or withdrawn. If we continue to seek the perfect formula or to demand perfect security, nothing of any consequence is likely to happen. I should welcome, to begin with, the most modest of agreements, even of only token significance, in a timed and progressive series of accomodations. The important thing is to set the machinery of disarmament into motion, no matter at what level. Why should not peace have its escalation as well as war? There will never be a better chance—in fact, there may never be another chance—to stop nuclear testing in the atmosphere. If we proceed with our intention to resume atmospheric testing, we shall not escape responsibility for the consequences by continuing to point an accusing finger at Khrushchev.

Do the issues at stake justify a nuclear war? Only if you believe that the way to defend a civilization is to destroy it. How many millions, how many hundreds of millions, must be killed in order to prove a folly? History, said Hegel, repeats itself twice—first as tragedy, then as farce.

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

With a typically generous disregard for national frontiers and traditional vested interests, the Editors of PR invite a selected list of contributors to discuss "the position of the West in the cold war." It is tacitly assumed that Americans and Europeans share a common interest in the defense of the West, and moreover that Europe and America are equal partners in fighting the cold war. Else why should it be taken for granted that differences of opinion over the best strategy to be pursued will cut across national frontiers? This confidence is praiseworthy, but a trifle question-begging. The problem outlined by the organizers of the symposium—how to win the cold war—cannot be divorced from the question whether Europe

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and America will continue to see eye to eye. At any rate a contributor who happens to be located on the European side of the Atlantic must make it plain that he has a special stake in the avoidance of global war. As was recently noted by C. P. Snow in a somewhat similar context, people in Britain—and the same is true of all other West European countries, and very possibly of the East European ones too—cannot afford to regard nuclear war as an instrument of policy: they are too keenly aware that, if fought on a larger than merely tactical scale, it would mean the end of their particular habitat. This has nothing to do with neutralism or pacifism, though it may become a stimulus of both; it is simply a recognition of the facts. Nor is it a party matter. There is no difference on this score between Sir Charles Snow and General de Gaulle, although the former is probably more likely to draw the conclusion that the European nation-state no longer corresponds to modern military and technological realities. That Europe is in danger of being reduced to ashes in a war between the two colossi of East and West, is common ground among people of the most varied political views. After all it was de Gaulle who some time ago publicly observed that *all* European countries might in a future war be devastated by their respective nuclear "protectors."

To say this is not to dispute that "the West" is a reality; merely to remind Americans that they cannot take the military and political partnership of Western Europe for granted, any more than the Kremlin can rely on the readiness of East European statesmen to stake the existence of their countries in all circumstances. At the moment such considerations are overlaid and masked by the Berlin issue and the wider problem of Germany. They will inevitably come to the forefront if—as seems likely—the German problem is temporarily settled on the basis of tacit recognition by the West of the territorial and political status quo. Leaving aside the question whether such a settlement—which need not take the form of a new "Munich" visible to all concerned—may not result in a gradual but permanent demoralization of Germany and Western Europe generally, it seems likely that once the tension has abated, there will be a renewed effort on the part at least of the Continental European governments (the "Six") to make sure that in any future hypothetical conflict between the USA and the USSR, Europe does not become the principal

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battleground. It is at least arguable that in this context some form of military (not political) disengagement may look attractive to both sides. By 1970 Western Europe is likely to have achieved some form of political union, together with an unprecedented degree of economic development and prosperity, and a modest capacity for atomic retaliation (though hardly for effective defense or protection of its populations). It will then assume the aspect of an extremely valuable, and at the same time highly vulnerable, prize for the prospective winner of a global war. Since the European nation-state (or even the whole of Europe combined) is no longer able to participate fully in a conflict between the super-powers (not being built *à l'échelle nucléaire*), the temptation to "contract out" will probably mount *pari passu* with the presumptive readiness of the true world powers to spare Europe the horrors of a nuclear devastation which would smash the coveted prize of global victory. It is at any rate conceivable that the Russians, if not the Chinese, might concur in such an appreciation. But if this is so—and European political leaders would be foolish as well as unpatriotic if they did not bank on such a chance—can one really talk of "the West" as a political unity? Must one not at least grant that even within the hypothetical Atlantic Union of the 1970's and 1980's, Western Europe will tend to pursue certain primary aims of its own, among which the aim of self-preservation will come increasingly to take first place?

Nothing that has been said so far constitutes any reason why Americans and West Europeans should not try to find common ground in respect of the overriding problem of *averting* nuclear war. But here the primary responsibility lies with the United States, while the consequences of failure are likely to be of mortal significance chiefly to Europe. This is merely another way of saying that Europe looks to America to prevent the outbreak of global war if possible, and if it is not possible, to refrain from treating Europe as a battlefield. It may be that the Europeans have no moral grounds for demanding to be placed in a relatively privileged position; but the conviction that atomic war, while not necessarily fatal to the USA or the Soviet Union, must be fatal to them, cannot fail to determine their political behavior in the years ahead. It is merely common sense to recognize this and build one's expectations upon it.

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From the standpoint of the other participants in the symposium, this whole argument may perhaps read like a lengthy digression from the real topic, viz., how "the West" can improve its international posture. I believe on the contrary that it is central to the theme, once it is realized that "the West" is made up of two unequal halves, with military predominance vested in the only part of the North Atlantic world which can conceivably survive a full-scale nuclear war. There is now—perhaps for the first time—a tendency among Americans to lean on Europe, possibly even to exaggerate the strength of Europe. This may be a sign of flagging self-confidence, or simply of greater maturity. In any case it does not relieve the United States of the burden of working out a global policy which makes sense to the uncommitted countries. It is all very well to ask what "the West" can do, but we all know that nothing effective will be done unless the USA gives the lead, or at any rate makes it possible for a lead to be given and then places its weight behind it. What that lead should be is a matter for debate among those who (like the writer of these lines) still hope, though with diminishing confidence, that the worst can be averted. We are here talking about *political* choices: it may be assumed that, were Europe to be lost, the United States would transform itself into a military fortress (probably with an authoritarian form of government) and prepare for the inevitable. As long as we have not reached this point, we may as well allow our minds to roam more or less freely over the available political alternatives. A few rather obvious considerations suggest themselves to an observer who is not bound by the traditional liberal pieties. For brevity's sake they may be listed in the form of brief recommendations, leaving the intellectual background to take care of itself:

1) Work for a form of Atlantic Union, without renouncing the ultimate aim of world government through the United Nations. In the *long run,* the latter is the only rational aim, but before we get there, "the West" will have to work out common institutions limited to the Atlantic world, i.e., Western Europe and North America, plus such other entrants as may from time to time qualify for membership. (Clearly there is room for argument as to what parts of the Latin American and/or Mediterranean worlds should be regarded as eligible).

2) Assume that in the *long run* the East-West conflict will lose

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much of its present acuteness, at any rate so far as Russia is concerned (China is a different, and probably more intractable, problem). Until this happens—either through political changes in the USSR or through a gradual lessening of tension consequent upon the discovery that neither side can "win"—keep one's powder dry. Unfortunately there is little hope of effective disarmament.

3) Take it for granted that all, or nearly all, the backward ("underdeveloped") countries will establish national-socialist, or *soi-disant* communist, regimes. The term "national-socialist" (which need not carry pejorative meanings) is to be preferred because in fact the problem facing the political elites of these countries is how to marry "socialism" and nationalism. Every national movement needs a philosophy, or *Weltanschauung*. In the 19th century, nationalists invariably described themselves as liberals; today they describe themselves as socialists. This state of affairs cannot be altered, and need not frighten anyone. In all probability its practical significance is small.

4) Do not make a panacea of liberal democracy on the Western model: a form of government only appropriate to highly civilized and very wealthy countries. The basic problem of all backward societies is to establish effective authority and to associate the people with the workings of the state. The latter may eventually "wither away" in the most highly developed Western countries; it cannot be expected to do so in the rest. This is not an excuse for totalitarianism, which in fact is only an extreme case of over-all control by a revolutionary party with utopian or irrational aims. There are numerous intermediate forms; under fortunate circumstances even a totalitarian regime can find a road back halfway to normal, as was the case in Yugoslavia and Poland.

5) Democratic socialism (which by its nature is limited to civilized industrial democracies with highly developed labor movements) has little to offer the majority of backward areas, but may act as a link between them and the wealthy industrial countries. The latter are anyhow all tending to adopt planned ("mixed") economies, so that socialist practices are gradually being built into their structures, even if the official ideology remains resolutely liberal (in the 19th century sense of the term). The classical case is Britain, but the United States is probably about to follow suit.

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6) It would be a major victory for sanity if someone in Washington—preferably the President—could bring himself to announce in public that the United States is not opposed to "socialism" *elsewhere*. This happens to be true, but needs to be said. Vague expressions like "social reform" won't do, since the new political and intellectual elites, for very good reasons, are sold on the word "socialism." In fact Mr. Kennedy could probably win the cold war at one blow, over large portions of the globe, if he made a convincing statement to this effect. But that is doubtless too much to hope for.

ROBERT LOWELL

I—6. I want to write a few sentences on the first six questions as a whole, and then go on to the seventh. What we have to offer the world is some sort of what I would like to call parliamentary socialism. That is an administration that provides for its subjects, guarantees a good many human rights, and can be voted out of office. This very great good is unfortunately, however, poisoned and confused by a crusading nationalism and the amoral power struggle.

7. I am trying to think of some way of answering the seventh question simply and strongly. No nation should possess, use, or retaliate with its bombs. I believe we should rather die than drop our own bombs. Every man belongs to his nation and to the world. He can only, as things are, belong to the world by belonging to his own nation. Yet the sovereign nations, despite their feverish last minute existence, are really obsolete. They imperil the lives that they were created to protect.

MARY McCARTHY

It doesn't seem to me meaningful to talk about "the West" as though it were a political or spiritual whole confronting "the East." The Western nations are divided and not just on what might

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be considered merely tactical questions, such as whether or not to admit Communist China to the U.N. or what terms to make on Berlin—assuming these are tactical questions and not questions of principle, though indeed this is one of the points of division, for there is a strain in American thought that does not care to distinguish between tactics and principle and regards any mobility vis-a-vis Communism as a "surrender" of principle or to put it in ad men's terms "assuming a posture of retreat," which may mean the same thing.

As far as principles goes, what principle unites the West? It cannot be the so-called Western values, for these values, if they include freedom and the usual democratic rights, are not prized by Spain or Portugal or even by the De Gaulle government. It cannot be a belief in God or in a transcendent power or Idea. Can it be the Western standard of living—erected into a principle? Possibly. Yet this consumer well-being is not enjoyed by large parts of the Italian population, not to mention the Spanish and the Portuguese. Khrushchev, moreover, has been promising to give the Russians a standard of living that will equal that of the West, in terms of cars, television sets, frigidaires, mixers, etc., and I don't take it as an article of faith that he will be unable to do this—his meeting with Nixon in the model kitchen struck me as prophetic. Does it boil down to opposition to Communism? Is this the unifying principle? But opposition to Communism is not a principle *per se*. Anti-Communism in itself is scarcely a virtue—look at Hitler or Senator McCarthy or the average anti-Communist. Anti-Communism, to be principled, must base itself, surely, on some moral good. Thus it appears that reasoning on this subject goes around in circles. We have no *reason,* beyond mere prejudice or crude interest, to stand together against "the East" unless we stand together for something else—for political freedom, as well as material ease (on which America will not always have a monopoly). But this we don't do, and the more threatened we feel by Communism, the more we are encouraged to seek allies (and not only in foreign lands) who have an "interest" in opposing Communism, as though this "interest"—capital investments or an international religious network or maintenance of a ruling class in power—were the only human force we could trust.

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It is claimed that what is at stake is survival: after the West has survived it can reopen its museum of values, some wings of which have been closed for the duration. But this is what the Russians claim too. They too have a museum of Western values. The "cultural heritage" of the Greeks, of the Romans, of the philosophers, poets, and painters, would not be lost if the West were to lose the battle for men's minds as it is called. And the Russians too promise freedom, not just culture in libraries, once capitalism has been finally defeated. . .

My feeling is that political thought today would be less paralyzed if we stopped using terms like "the West," which are sheer cant at present, and said what we really meant, e.g., "nations friendly to capitalism," if that *is* what we mean. This would make our heads a little clearer in the argument we conduct with ourselves about nuclear war. While we prepare to die for the survival of the West, it would be reassuring to know what the West is or was, before we and it died for it. "He died for liber-r-ty," an old Irish saloon-keeper said to me one St. Patrick's Day, speaking of Robert Emmett. This was true, roughly speaking, of the Irish patriot, but it cannot be said of a nation of "patriots" herded hopefully in bomb shelters with a stock of canned goods. If we die it will not be for liberty but because we had no real choice in the matter. If you gave the ordinary man a free choice he would prefer a harsh life under Communism to death in a thermonuclear holocaust. Who wouldn't? And if the ordinary man were politically serious he would still more emphatically choose life under Communism to mass incineration. Alive, he could engage in political agitation, get arrested, go to Siberia; if he were shot eventually for his activities, his death at least would have some meaning.

This in fact is the difference. From the point of view of the ordinary conscript death in war has always been senseless as compared to death in bed. The drafted soldiers and the bombed civilians who died in the last war did not, for the most part probably, die for liberty as a matter of intention; nevertheless, their death served a purpose: the fall of the Nazis and the end of the concentration camps. Their deaths can be said to have been "worth it." But today no such clear and defined aim can be proposed for the extinction of most of the population of the world, to say nothing of the genetic con-

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sequences for the survivors. Neither Western values, nor the Western standard of living, nor capitalism in its present form, nor faith in God (I should think) would survive an exchange of hydrogen bombs. When war becomes total, war aims—that is, objectives apart from war itself—disappear. If we die, it will not be for freedom but out of a kind of inert necessity, in a chain reaction of challenge-and-response like the process of fission itself.

To say this is not to advocate surrender to Communism; that is really a scholastic issue like What-would-you-do-if-a-Negro-wanted-to-marry-your-sister? There is far more danger now of nuclear war than there is of what is called a "Communist take-over." It is on this issue—the issue of how to disarm—that we ought to try to regain our freedom of thought and hence our freedom of political action.

HANS J. MORGENTHAU

The cold war is being waged on two fronts: in Europe where the issue is Germany, and in Asia, Africa, and Latin America where the issue is the political orientation of the underdeveloped nations of the world.

In Europe, the cold war arose from the unsettled territorial issues of the Second World War. At the end of that war, a line of military demarcation was established between East and West which placed the Red Army a hundred miles east of the Rhine. The Soviet Union has consistently maintained that this line constitutes the definitive western boundary of the Soviet bloc, while the West has as consistently maintained that this line is only provisional and that the definitive boundary would have to run farther to the east. The West has successfully protected that line through the policy of containment. Stalin and Khrushchev have attempted by all kinds of devices to obtain from the West the formal recognition of the legitimacy of the territorial status quo in Europe; the raising of the Berlin issue by Khrushchev is but the latest of these attempts.

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Two factors have prevented the West from considering such formal recognition: the trauma of the Yalta agreements and the fear of West German reaction. The Yalta agreements were an attempt to undo, at least in a certain measure, the political consequences of the conquest of Eastern Europe by the Red Army. This was to be achieved through free, democratic elections. This being the intention of the West, it could hardly be expected that the Soviet Union would cooperate in dismantling its recently conquered European empire. Yet Western opinion has never recovered from the shock over the failure of the Soviet Union to live up to the Yalta agreements.

The issue of the European status quo has come to a head in the issues of German unification and the revision of the Oder-Neisse line. For if the Soviet Union has its way, Germany will remain divided in virtual perpetuity and the present boundary between East Germany and Poland will remain unchanged. But while the West has committed itself in words to German unification and the revision of the Oder-Neisse line, it has been unable to devise a policy in support of these objectives. Here is indeed the Achilles' heel of the Western position.

What the West pretends to be seeking in Europe can obviously not be obtained short of either a victorious war or irresistible diplomatic pressure. In other words, it cannot be obtained at all in the foreseeable future. The statesmen of the West know this, but they feel compelled to continue their verbal commitment to unattainable goals. For this verbal commitment provides at the very least the rationalization for the Western orientation of West Germany. West Germany has joined the Atlantic Alliance with the understanding that the Alliance will be used as an instrument for unification and the revision of the Oder-Neisse line. In the measure that it becomes obvious to West German opinion that the Alliance cannot be used for that purpose West Germany may turn elsewhere for the satisfaction of its national aspirations. It is this possibility of an Eastern orientation of West Germany which threatens the West with a danger and provides an opportunity for the Soviet Union.

The United States has fought the cold war in Europe with a considerable measure of success. While it has been unable to advance, it has not been forced to retreat. It has succeeded in doing what it originally set out to do: to contain the Soviet Union within the

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limits its power had reached at the end of the Second World War. Yet the positive goals of the cold war, unification of Germany and revision of her Eastern frontiers, not only were not achieved, but they were proven of being incapable of achievement, and our persistent verbal commitment to them threatens to jeopardize either the peace of the world or the success of our containment policy or both.

On the other cold war front, in the struggle for the minds of men in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the position of the United States is both more complex and, even in the short run, less satisfactory. The United States must overcome a number of handicaps, some the result of objective conditions, others of its own making.

First of all, the United States is a Western capitalistic nation. Both in its civilization and social and economic structure, it belongs to that complex of nations which until recently were able to hold Africa, Latin America, and the more advanced areas of Asia in a condition of colonial or semi-colonial dependency. It has military alliances with these nations, and while it has generally shunned and even opposed outright colonial policies, it has actively and successfully participated in the semi-colonial exploitation of backward nations. Thus the resentment against the former colonial powers attaches also to it, and its policies of foreign aid are frequently suspected as serving in disguise the traditional ends of colonialism.

Furthermore, the United States, by dint of its pluralistic political philosophy and social system, cannot bring to the backward nations of the world a simple message of salvation, supported first by dedicated and disciplined revolutionary minorities and then by totalitarian control. In the nature of things, the advantage lies here with the Communist powers. They are, as it were, specialists in exploiting a revolutionary situation, which is bound to cause us embarrassment. For while the Communists are able to direct a revolution into the desired channels through their use of a disciplined minority, we, even if we are convinced that revolution is inevitable and therefore do not oppose it, tend to look with misgivings upon it since we cannot control the direction it will take.

The Communist powers have still another advantage over the United States in that their problems and achievements are more meaningful, at least on the surface, to the underdevelped nations than are ours. The Soviet Union has achieved, and Communist China

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attempts to achieve, what the more enlightened underdeveloped nations seek: a drastic increase in the standard of living through rapid industrialization. The Communist powers use totalitarian control as their instrument and Communist doctrine as rationalization and justification. Seeking the same results, the underdeveloped nations cannot help being attracted by the methods which brought these results about elsewhere. In contrast, the slow process, stretching over centuries, through which the nations of the West achieved a high standard of living through industrialization must appeal much less to them. That appeal is lessened even more by the economic processes of the free market and the political processes of liberal democracy through which in large measure the Western industrialization was achieved. For these processes require a degree of moral restraint and economic and political sophistication which are largely absent in the underdeveloped nations. The simple and crude methods of totalitarianism must appear to them much more congenial.

While the United States must live with these handicaps which are not of its making, trying to overcome them by compensating for them, there are others which are the result of misconceptions in our thinking and errors in the execution of policy.

The United States is both domestically and internationally, and must so appear particularly to the underdeveloped nations, a conservative power. Abroad, it wants to preserve the territorial status quo, and domestically it wants to protect and develop what it has achieved. In consequence of this general conservative outlook, the United States has tended to support abroad the most conservative elements because they seem to be "safest" in terms of the preservation of the status quo. This has proven to be a fatal miscalculation. For in many of the underdeveloped nations the choice is not between the status quo and change, but between change under Communist auspices and change which at the very least is not directed by Communists. For reasons mentioned above, the United States has recently come to realize that it cannot help but support radical change. Yet this realization faces it with a new problem.

Change can be brought about by two different methods: through peaceful reforms or through violent revolution. Peaceful change requires the cooperation of the ruling groups, which has but rarely been forthcoming. For social and economic change is bound to

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threaten the foundations of their power. If these groups do not cooperate or, as they frequently do, actively oppose change, the United States must turn to alternative groups. Where they do not exist it must develop them. In this task, the United States has signally failed. Yet when worst comes to worst it must be willing to reconcile itself to revolutionary change, even at the risk that such change may take place under Communist auspices.

At this point, foreign policies and domestic politics merge. For the domestic climate of opinion constitutes at present a virtually insuperable impediment to American officials abroad pursuing such a novel and risky policy of promoting revolution. Communist successes abroad have in the past been equated with treason at home. Successive Presidents have failed in the task, which only they can perform, of educating the American people in the facts of international life. If President Kennedy continues to fail to bring home to the American people what the facts of international life require of American foreign policy, he will have doomed to failure the cold war policies of the United States in the uncommitted third of the world.

On the level of the execution of policy, that failure is threatened by the deficiencies of our policy of foreign aid. The American theory and practice of foreign aid during the fifties was derived largely from certain unexamined assumptions which are part of the American folklore of politics. The popular mind has established a number of simple and highly doubtful correlations between foreign aid, on the one hand, and a rising standard of living, social and political stability, democratic institutions and practices, and a peaceful foreign policy, on the other. The simplicity of these correlations is so reassuring that the assumption of a simple and direct relationship between foreign aid and economic, social, and political progress is rarely questioned.

Thus fundamental questions like the following were hardly ever asked explicitly: what are the social, political, and moral effects of foreign aid likely to be under different circumstances? Does successful foreign aid require a particular intellectual, political, and moral climate, or will the injection of capital and technological capability from the outside create this climate? To what extent and under what conditions is it possible for one nation to transform, through outside

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intervention, the economic and technological life of another nation? More specifically, in terms of the political objective of keeping the uncommitted nations uncommitted, how is one to create that positive relationship in the mind of the recipient between the aid and its beneficial results, and the political philosophy, system, and objectives of the giver? As long as the recipient disapproves of the politics of the giver, the political effects of the aid are lost. These effects are similarly lost as long as the recipient remains unconvinced that the aid received is but a natural manifestation of the politics of the giver. Foreign aid, then, remains politically ineffective as long as the recipient says either, "aid is good, but the politics of the giver are bad," or "aid is good, but the politics of the giver have nothing to do with it."

Questions such as these require policies of extraordinary subtlety and intricacy to answer them. The simple correlation between foreign aid and what the United States desires in the uncommitted nations could not provide the answers. That correlation is a projection of the domestic experience of America onto the international scene. Capital formation and investment and technological innovation created the wealth and prosperity of America, and, so it was assumed, the export of American capital and technology into the underdeveloped nations would bring forth similar results there. The similarity between this and the Wilsonian expectation is striking. Wilson wanted to bring the peace and order of America to the rest of the world by exporting its democratic institutions. His contemporary heirs wanted to bring the wealth and prosperity of America to the rest of the world through the export of American capital and technology. Yet while the failure of the Wilsonian experiment was quick and drastically revealed, the failure of foreign aid, simplistically conceived, has been less obvious, albeit no less drastic.

The United States must start thinking of foreign aid not as a self-sufficient technical enterprise but as a political weapon to be applied to a great variety of situations with great subtlety and sophistication. The first prerequisite for the development of a viable philosophy of foreign aid is the recognition of the diversity of policies that go by that name. At least six such policies can be distinguished which have only one thing in common: the transfer of money and economic services from one nation to another. They are humanitarian

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foreign aid, military foreign aid, bribery, prestige foreign aid, subsistence foreign aid and foreign aid for economic development. To identify each situation and the measures of foreign aid appropriate to it requires a political sensitivity both in understanding and action which thus far has been largely absent from the operations of our foreign aid. Yet without it much of our effort in this field will continue to be wasteful and even counterproductive in that it creates expectations which are bound to be disappointed.

To win the cold war on this second front or even to hold our own is bound to be much more difficult than to win it or hold our own in Europe; for there the problem has posed itself primarily in the traditional terms of military power and diplomatic manipulation. The cold war in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, once we have realized its true nature, will test not only our political inventiveness but also our moral stamina. For when we are faced with reverses, which will be inevitable, we will be tempted to seek military solutions to the problems that face us. Yet military solutions will not only be counterproductive locally, but they will also conjure up the possibility of the world-wide catastrophe of nuclear war. The Soviet Union will have to come to terms with the same temptation when it finds itself losing ground. The degree of the understanding of the issues which the cold war presents, and of the self-restraint in the choice of methods in dealing with them will then decide whether the cold war will remain cold or else will degenerate into a shooting war which is likely to mean the end of all of us.

NORMAN PODHORETZ

1-3. Though the West has obviously been losing ground in the cold war, I don't believe that this can be attributed either to Soviet successes in foreign policy or to failures of American statesmanship. The change in the balance of world political power has come about, very simply, as a result of the change in the balance of *military* power and has, in my opinion, little or nothing to do with

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the superior appeal of Communist ideology. There was no way, short of a preventive war while we still held a monopoly over the H-bomb, of stopping the Soviets from catching up—and surely American reluctance to wage a preventive nuclear war cannot be taken without further argument as a sign of weakness, structural or otherwise. Once the Russians caught up, the Western position in various places—particularly Southeast Asia—was bound to be challenged, for these positions had been maintained in the first place largely by an unambiguous nuclear superiority. So long as we are unwilling to fight a nuclear war to protect Laos or South Vietnam or—ultimately—Formosa (and I personally hope this will be forever), we will continue to have great and perhaps insuperable difficulties in preventing Communist conquest of the "overextended" Western perimeter by subversion, infiltration, and guerrilla warfare. (This is not to say, of course, that the effort being made by the Kennedy administration to find ways of combatting such techniques is necessarily doomed to failure. I myself am skeptical, but who knows?) In Europe, the change in the nuclear balance of power has mainly had the effect of destroying any remaining Dullesian illusions about roll-back and liberation. But the brilliantly successful economic recuperation of Western Europe has also destroyed any hope the Communists may have had ten or fifteen years ago of making further gains. As for Africa, what we have there is, in some sense, a totally new cold-war battleground or perhaps a testing-ground of strictly political and economic competition between West and East. It is only the end of the first inning, and so far as I can tell, there is still no score.

This brings me to your second and third questions. I would certainly be in favor of a re-orientation of American policy toward "movements and leaders of change throughout the world." I don't know how "decisive" the changes that have been made in this respect under Kennedy are, but I don't think there is any question that a new attitude exists in Washington. (Witness the stipulation of the Alliance for Progress that countries receiving aid under the plan must undertake social reform, and the pressure being put on Ngo Dinh Diem to democratize his regime.) But anyone who supports such a reorientation ought not to deceive himself into thinking that it would necessarily strengthen our position in the cold war. The extent to which Communist subversion of Laos, for example,

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might have been countered by a more enlightened policy under Eisenhower is a matter of speculation. Conceivably, the Communists might have maneuvered themselves into a strong position even if we had backed the most progressive elements in the country instead of the most reactionary and vociferously anti-Communist ones. Similarly, are we really so sure that the Communist assault on South Viet Nam has profited from the undemocratic leadership of Ngo Dinh Diem? Even if Washington succeeds in pressuring Diem into behaving better, or even if a competent, forward-looking, democratic administration were to take over the country, the Communists would probably still peck away, and we would still be left with the problem of how to contend with infiltration and subversion in a far-off place and under unfavorable military conditions.

In other words, while we now know with reasonable certainty that past American policy in Southeast Asia was not only inhumane but stupid and futile from a cold-war point of view, we do not know that a more humane policy would turn out to be any less futile. I believe that a more humane policy is worth pursuing for its own sake, and I would support it on those grounds. If politicians are forced to construct *realpolitikische* justifications for actions that are good (or at least potentially good) in themselves, that is one thing. But the rest of us are better off with honesty and—shall I apologize for the word?—idealism.

4-5. I don't believe for a moment that "the intellectual values and freedoms and the political and civil liberties we all affirm" are inseparable from the particular complex of political and economic institutions that now exist in the West. On the contrary, I would even go so far as to say that certain of these institutions are positively hostile to the values and freedoms they purport to serve. The real problem here is the constant confusion in people's minds—a confusion that the cold war has done much to deepen—between the values presumably embodied in the institutions of our society and the values that are actually promoted and sustained by those institutions. What we need—and what until very recently the extraordinary willingness of intellectuals to think about everything in cold-war terms (which means precisely thinking in terms of the assumption that there is a rough identity between the institutions of American society and the values "we all affirm") has deprived us of—is an energetic and un-

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remitting effort to keep a vision of the good society alive and to judge existing institutions *as they actually function* by the extent to which they further that vision. Let me point out that a commitment to such visionary ideals, no matter how utopian they may seem, is the best conceivable safeguard against being taken in by the lies of politicians and ideologues, West *and* East, who are in the business of persuading the credulous to accept what they do at face value. During the 30's, as everyone knows, many American intellectuals whose radicalism began with a commitment to a freer and more humane society allowed themselves to be persuaded—often against the evidence of their senses—that the Soviet Union was dedicated to furthering the values of the liberal-radical tradition. These intellectuals finally turned against Communism, most of them, when they decided that Stalin had betrayed the revolution, and some of them turned in the late 30's to Trotsky, believing that a true proletarian revolution would emerge out of the impending clash between the fascists and the bourgeois democracies. (I recommend a glance at the back files of *Partisan Review* to anyone who doubts that this prediction was taken with the utmost seriousness by several of the most intelligent political minds of the day.) When the true revolution failed to develop and a new conflict began to shape up in the postwar period between the Western democracies and the Communists, these same intellectuals cried not "a plague on both your houses" (as might perhaps have been expected) but turned instead into vigorous supporters of the Western cause. Everyone, as I say, knows all this, but does everyone know what created the pattern? I think the pattern was created by the notion that values are "unreal" if they cannot be attached to power. This is a notion that grows directly out of the Marxist's contempt for "utopianism" (an attitude, incidentally, that many non-Marxist liberals have learned to share). There must always be a class or a party or a social force or a nation to supply a basis for effectuating values, and if none happens to exist and the energy is also lacking to send lonely cries into the wilderness in the hope that someone may some day listen—why then, one can always make a choice among the things that do happen to exist and then proceed to convince oneself that one is following the best and most "responsible" possible course. What becomes along the way of the values that started the whole process is pretty obvious: they turn into

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a dim memory, intoned mechanically, drained of all vitality, nothing in them left to inspire thought or passion, hatred or love. Or even, irony of ironies, political action.

To me, the most hopeful development in years is the recent reappearance of a body of utopian social criticism based on a very clear vision of what a decent life on this planet might look like, and full of concrete ideas which, if they have little chance of being put into immediate effect, at least serve to refresh and nourish our fading sense of what the liberal-radical tradition has always stood for and how far short we still are of achieving it. The priests are forever distorting the prophets—sometimes by a successful pretense of being prophets themselves. And the only remedy is for the prophets to say them nay and remind them of what the Lord really demands of man.

6. It seems fairly well established that Khrushchev's objective is to spread Communism by any means he can find short of nuclear war. His foreign policy aims, in other words, differ from Stalin's only in the tactics he is using to achieve them. The objectives of the West, however, have changed. I don't think anyone in the West seriously entertains the hope of roll-back or liberation any longer; at most there is the dim and distant hope of forcing Khrushchev to renounce his imperialist aims or buying enough time through deterrence for changes to take place in the Communist world. In the shorter run, the West is committed to stopping the advance of Communism by any means short of nuclear war where it is possible to do so, and by nuclear war in certain areas (Berlin and Formosa). This, of course, puts the West continually on the defensive while Khrushchev is at liberty to probe, push, and swing at his own initiative. Since Khrushchev appears to be convinced that he can achieve his objectives without a nuclear war, I doubt that we need to worry about the Russians deliberately provoking us into one; the real danger is that they will provoke us into one without meaning to—that, in other words, they will impose one frustration too many on a sorely tried adversary. Therefore, if Khrushchev really wants to avoid a nuclear war, he would be wise to limit his own objectives and settle for what he has always claimed he wanted—namely recognition of the status quo, disarmament, and "peaceful" competition. The question is, if Khrushchev were willing to negotiate such a settlement

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(and I must emphasize that I am by no means sure that he is), would the West be ready to accept it? Would we, who are still unwilling or unable even to recognize East Germany and Red China, agree to ratifying the status quo in a treaty? Would we balk at nuclear disarmament, even with fairly adequate inspection, because—given Russian superiority in conventional forces—it would leave us at a great military disadvantage? Would we be afraid of losing out altogether in a disarmed world? I myself would happily take all these risks in preference to the dangers we are presently living with, and I would press for an unremitting effort to negotiate with that end in view. If it were to turn out that the Russians have no intention of limiting their objectives, we would at least have learned something. But we can never know without trying, and I doubt that we have so far tried very hard.

What I am saying, in effect, is that I am optimistic about the West's prospects in a disarmed world and altogether pessimistic about everyone's prospects under the policy of deterrence. Nuclear weapons have proved to be less than completely effectual in halting the advance of Communism (they have not even been able to keep it out of the Western hemisphere), and what frightens me most is that we might be pushed into a nuclear war as the inevitable frustrations of the next decade mount. First Cuba, then Laos, then Berlin, and soon, it seems, South Vietnam, and the Right cries Defeat and Humiliation at every turn, while Kennedy makes himself more and more vulnerable by pretending that he is indomitably holding the line instead of explaining that he is trying to effect a series of necessary strategic retreats. Thus the war party in this country (and I am convinced that that is what the radical Right is) moves from strength to strength, finding more and more arguments to bolster its belief (still not admitted) that a preventive war aimed at destroying Communism is the only answer. Certain other schools of anti-Communist thinking in this country suffer from what I would call inverse Bolshevism—that is, the secret belief that Communism really does represent the wave of the future and therefore can only be stopped by a forceful interference with the laws of history. I find the idea that Communism represents the wave of the future altogether incredible; the appeal of Communism, in my opinion, rests on its apparent ability to foster the rapid industrialization of backward coun-

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tries. Communist ideals are, of course, powerfully attractive, but even Russian youth is beginning to learn that the Soviet system represents the betrayal rather than the fulfillment of these ideals. To the extent that we have also betrayed and continue to betray our own ideals—which are historically not very different from those of the Socialist tradition—we are bound to suffer in political and ideological competition. We have not yet even begun to explore what a *real* belief in democracy and individual liberty implies, say, in the field of economic development. Suppose, for example, that the United States were to encourage and foster the discovery of techniques of industrialization that might result in prosperity without leading inexorably to alienation? Yet to try something of that sort means being sufficiently critical of our own institutions to imagine how they ought to be modified in the process of being transplanted; it means becoming aware of the extent to which a particular form of technology is in practice the enemy of our values. And that, in turn, means being very clear about what our values are. So the paradox is that we can probably halt the advance of Communism without nuclear war only by committing ourselves to a humanitarian and idealistic policy. Nor can we use the humanitarian impulse as a tactic and hope to achieve the same result. In short, everything depends on the prophets again. Do enough of them exist to make a real difference?

7. I don't think anything is worth a nuclear war, even though I would admit that the deterrence theorists have a point when they say that our willingness to fight such a war may be the best way of preventing it. Nevertheless, the willingness to fight draws nourishment from the debatable idea that recovery, or even victory, is possible. Herman Kahn offers a "complete description of nuclear war" which includes elaborate calculations of casualties, genetic damage, food contamination, and the like, and he argues that with proper preparations the United States could emerge from certain kinds of nuclear war relatively intact. What I would like to see is a similarly hard-headed and coldly objective description of surrender, with the same object of determining how long it might take to "recuperate" from Communist domination. How many would be shot, how many deported, how many imprisoned in concentration camps, how much of the economic plant would be stolen, what sort of political institutions would be created and who would run them,

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how much resistance would be offered by the population, and finally, how long might it take for the Russians and/or Chinese to become "Americanized?" I know that this sounds unserious, but if we are being asked to make our choices on the basis of unflinching "realism" and rationality, I don't see why the alternative of surrender (which I do *not* favor) should not be made as "thinkable" as the possibility of nuclear war has been made in the last year or two.

DAVID RIESMAN

1. In many ways the very preoccupation in our country with "winning" or "losing" the cold war with the Soviet Union is a distraction from the deeper problems of an unevenly affluent society.

Writing these comments in Japan, I am reminded of the enormous impact of Western values as well as Western techniques even in countries and among social strata that are often considered (and sometimes profess to be) "anti-American:" in most of the less developed countries of the world, including the Soviet Union, our vices as well as our accomplishments (including among the latter our effort to provide relatively open encouragement to talent through a widespread system of public education) are imitated in spite of periodic nativist resistance. If we do not in a game of mutual terror destroy ourselves in nuclear war, or bury ourselves underground literally and culturally in the frustrations that the cold war intensifies, we can permit ourselves to realize the extent to which the West is very much a going concern. And yet, especially in the United States, we are persuaded by illusions of omnipotence, by demogogic pressures on our leadership, and by belligerent mass media, that we have suffered one defeat after another (Cuba, Laos, South Vietnam —you name the next one) and that we must stop this process of apparent attrition by "standing firm" in the revolutionary world.

The cold war has strengthened and made visible some endemic shortcomings in our society. We have not been simply a "peace

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loving democracy" either in our attitude toward nature and natural resources, or in our attitude in the Mexican War, the Civil War, or the Spanish-American War. Outside of the South, our society has not suffered defeat and therefore finds it difficult to comprehend and adjust to the limitations and sufferings that most human societies have experienced in the course of history. Moreover, each new wave of immigrants has wanted to prove its Americanism against minorities within and enemies without—and the cold war permits a convenient marriage of the two under the spectre of Communism. The xenophobia of the general population is not remorselessly combatted by a unified cosmopolitan élite, but instead many of the highly educated and very many of the highly placed share and even inflame the popular attitudes. Some of these were once Communists or close to Communism, and in shifting from one fanaticism to another, they are no longer voices crying in the wilderness but voices which may help to create a wilderness of the planet. Others have made the Soviet Union their special sphere of research and, after long years of warning against American complacency and fellow-traveller illusions, have hardened their views against potential change in the object of study, and thus in a sophisticated way and sometimes indeed against their own intentions give intellectual encouragement to the mindless anti-Communism of the population at large. (Sometimes this can take highly technical form, as in the Rand Corporation studies of Soviet civil defense.) With the exception of a handful of papers and broadcasters, the mass media share the admiration for seeming toughmindedness that makes cynical writers and businessmen editors report the cold war in cowboy terms, as if thermonuclear war were an appropriate test of human courage and endurance. And because of the over-representation in Congress of a provincial rural population (with its still powerful traditional rhetoric), dealings with foreign countries are channeled through the kind of moralistic slogans that paralyze any comprehensive efforts to cope with outstanding issues.

Similarly, our business dealings abroad, whether in private transactions or in public foreign aid, have to be managed according to a rhetoric of free enterprise such as we would not in practice tolerate at home. It sometimes seems as if the more rapacious forms of the capitalist spirit survive largely for overseas consumption. Victory and

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defeat in the cold war itself is sometimes interpreted as a kind of game of profit and loss on an ideological balance sheet with hardly a glance at the human race itself, whose fate may hang in the balance.

2. There is a kind of unwittingly shared agreement between many Americans and Communists on many vital issues. Both tend to identify radical social reform with Communism. Indeed, not a few nationalist leaders of former colonial countries, on being called Communists and treated like Communists by Americans, may in fact conclude that that's what they will have to be if they must choose. Beginning as non-Communists in search of some versions of freedom but not willing to be anti-Communists, they may be drawn into the Communist bloc from lack of any other place to turn. Both Communist and American reactionaries tend to see the world as polarized between two sharply opposed camps, whereas it is in the interest of the whole world, as well as of the nuclear powers, to encourage the development of as many variants of socialism as possible. Unfortunately many American public and private men do not even understand that there are many variants of "capitalism" but regard the mixed economy of the United States as capitalist in some conventional sense. A similar stereotyping blinds them to the actual existence of a number of forms of Communism: in the USSR, in Poland, in China, in Yugoslavia, perhaps in Cuba. If every movement of radical social change or even of protest is interpreted as Communist, then the growing domestic hysteria that we are "losing the cold war" is bound to increase. This hysteria will certainly produce Administration policies that are alternately truculent and conciliatory, leading in the latter case to right-wing charges of "appeasement" and in the former perhaps to the increased power of Khrushchev's domestic and Chinese enemies to undermine his policy of "peaceful coexistence." Or more accurately, the inconsistencies in our policy make it difficult—it would never be easy—for the Soviet leaders to understand our intentions and to act in ways less threatening and dangerous to peace.

I believe that the present Administration took office with hope of making a change: while in the Senate, President Kennedy had identified himself with Indian and Algerian hopes, and neither he nor his immediate advisors were inclined to lump all "un-American"

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or even anti-American regimes together as Communists or as equally beyond the pale of human encounter and discourse. So too, new ambassadors were appointed in Latin America and elsewhere (such as here in Japan) in the hope of getting outside the small circle of conservative politicians, military men and businessmen within which American emissaries had tended to become entombed, misled and comforted. But at the very same time, the hope of some others in the Administration to fight the cold war in a more streamlined, ascetic, and "hard" way led to the growth of new illusions about the possibility of contact with or creation of anti-guerrilla forces on the American side, analogous to the illusions of the French, who, defeated in Indo-China, retired to Algeria in the vain hope of applying Mao Tse Tung's guerrilla tactics among a basically hostile and anti-colonial population. Though the cosmopolitan Allen Dulles has been replaced by the parochial John McCone, it seems fair to say that the new Administration is more cosmopolitan than its predecessor, and its difficulties in dealing with the leaders of change throughout the world do not stem from vested business interests or provincial prejudices. Still, it is extremely difficult for well educated, successful and logical men to understand the angry, inchoate, illogical radical leaders of the new countries or the popular attitudes that underlie the radical mood of the non-western intelligentsia—an intelligentsia that obstinately refuses to grasp either the good intentions of the United States or the bad intentions of the U.S.S.R. And in some of our embassies there is enough legacy of McCarthyism (including people who simply aren't there) and fear of vested interests and monistic thinking back home to make officials wary of too eagerly seeking contact with radical groups of students and workers and other potential leaders; not only would they be criticized for this at home but also they would be criticized by fellow officials in the embassies (who now of course include operatives from the various intelligence services) and by conservatives like those Japanese businessmen who, along with Americans of like mind, tried to prevent the appointment of Ambassador Reischauer to this country, on the ground, among others, that he could speak Japanese too well. Even so, I believe that the Administration possesses the intellectual and moral capacity to become more receptive abroad, provided that it can gain the leeway on the domestic front that it can do only

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by combatting the radical Right rather than seeking itself to move onto rightist ground—an illusory operation since the Right can always go still further right and will.

3. By implication I have already indicated my hope that a variety of democratic socialisms can be encouraged in the world as alternatives both to traditionally exploitative developments in capitalism and in Communism. The former would seem clearly inappropriate and unlikely in the underveloped areas; the latter appeals to many intellectuals in those areas as a way to power and purpose when they cannot discover less violent and fanatical modes of achieving collective national goals. And in the overdeveloped countries, such as our own, it would seem essential to define new utopian goals that do not depend on the cold war as an imperative for our national existence. In quest of these goals, what is best and most humane in democratic socialism must be rescued from the Communist label and subjected to reformation and reinterpretation. The national economy must be organized in such a way that neither disarmament nor automation are costs borne by a few displaced workers, businessmen or stockholders. And the reinterpretation must tackle problems of social organization and mass culture that are often debated in the pages of this review.

4. I do believe that private property—and I don't mean large corporate property—furnishes direct and indirect support for civil liberties and cultural freedom. Private property enables some men to be independent of bureaucratic and organization pressures. The opportunity to start a small business, whether it be a publishing house, a magazine, a shoe store, or a construction company, is a genuine freedom. Moreover this freedom, by preventing monolithic control of employment, makes possible pluralistic centers of power and hence of opinion. (In the present cultural climate, private property also has far less benign aspects in encouraging surly aggressiveness and greed, and it is a task of enormous proportions—as I need hardly say—to envisage how one might separate those aspects of property that nourish the human spirit from those that corrupt it.)

Moreover, I believe strongly in the importance for civil liberties of an independent judiciary and of a bar not wholly committed to the defense of the ideological and economic status quo. A pluralistic pattern for academic organization is also a support for freedom; one could only wish that our public and parochial secondary schools

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could develop the traditions of freedom preserved in our best universities, private and public. And while most Americans are cynical about politicians, I am not: there is much courage and disinterestedness among our best senators and congressmen. Every one of those senators and representatives who has been liberal and enlightened on the questions dealt with in this symposium faces virulent attacks from the radical Right—that is from groups that have a constituency in virtually every congressional district and can muster funds in every district. Each congressman is in effect a "small businessman;" and while our political system is obviously out of joint in many ways, a few courageous men in office remind us of how greatly it protects political and civil liberty.

Yet institutional forms are noribund if not to tied to individual attitudes. If people feel impotent and hapless, elections are only a source for bad jokes. If professors retreat from large questions to safely specialized ones, they will neither test nor defend their own civil liberties or those of others. If we do not feel that we can control our destinies either from day to day or in the long run, freedom becomes an empty word, another shell in the cold war. The cold war needs to be brought under control primarily because it can lead to catastrophe. But it has the ancillary danger that, while it lasts, the defense and reinterpretation of freedom is made far more difficult, as illustrated by the young egocentric chauvinists who call themselves the Young Americans for Freedom. Even the possibility for safely attacking unfreedom and repression in the Communist countries requires a peaceful world, that is, a world not faced with the threat of nuclear war, hence one where political and ideological conflict can be a source for growth. Those traditions in the West that make for openness and fluidity, for spontaneity and vigor in persons and in institutions can under stress become frozen as part of the defensive armor of "the American way of life."

5. It is rare that anything human is an unmixed evil, and even the cold war has had some beneficent effect upon political thought. It has led many intellectuals to reexamine the values of their own culture, including its popular variant, as against an earlier xenophilia. The danger here, however, is that of moving from complaint to complacency. To some degree, moreover, the cold war has facilitated making American political thought more cosmopolitan, and even

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French thought has become less provincial: the Western world has been drawn more closely together. Nevertheless, the preoccupation with power has meant some concentration upon the more, rather than the less, troublesome countries; and political thought has often lost its closet quality but also its detachment, historical scope, and intellectual generosity.

I think on the whole it must be said that the cold war has been one factor in increasing the tendency to narrow, if sometimes productive, specialization among young people in academic life. On the one hand, the large questions seem politically unsafe; and on the other and perhaps even more important hand, they seen unanswerable. When governments have power to exterminate the globe, it is not surprising that anti-utopian novels, like *1984,* are popular, while utopian political thought about a more hopeful future nearly disappears. These developments have occurred at the same time that research has become a large, often vigorous, and well-equipped area in which to make a career. All this of course is most marked in the United States; elsewhere, speculation remains less unfashionable—though it may often be arid because unlinked to any empirical context. Above all, the cold war is a distraction from serious thought about man's condition on the planet. Novelists, poets, and prophets who are concerned with man's condition find themselves at home in the private and the unpolitical. Political thought tends to become the province of men who are often very intelligent, well-informed, and crisp, but seldom speculative, contemplative, or compassionate.

Among the public at large the effect of the cold war on thinking has been to reduce it to a series of fallacious historical analogies. We are consistently warned against "Munich," for instance, forgetting that there is not much danger of appeasing Khrushchev, who has no influential American constituency, while blinding ourselves to the actual appeasement of Adenauer and De Gaulle, Chiang Kai-Shek and other dictators who are tied to us by military assistance programs. By reference to Pearl Harbor we are periodically reminded of the dangers of surprise attack; and the flight of the U-2 was defended as a precaution against such an attack when that flight may well have caused the Russians to fear we knew where their "soft" missile bases lay and hence to fear surprise attack on their side, thus exacerbating the arms race and threatening our own security. So, too, the

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widely prevalent idea among many serious and dedicated men that we "have died for our ideals before" transfers a pre-nuclear morality into an era when, as Hans Morgenthau has pointed out, the nature of death is radically transformed by nuclear weapons. Hence the rethinking that is required is prevented by these false analogies which the cold war renders at once emotionally patriotic and intellectually convenient.

The preoccupation with big power politics narrows our view of human experience and possibility. In the never-ending task of understanding man's nature, a preliterate tribe in the South Pacific may teach unexpectedly much, while the study of Soviet society, important as I myself believe this to be, may have surprising limitations. The cold war tends to turn all roads to understanding into a superhighway on which only big, fast, non-stop cars travel.

6. We live in a transitional time, still dependent on balance of power diplomacy, even while seeking to move into a world order less dominated by force, that is, by the force of a few big powers and of rival élites within those powers. It seems to me conceivable that the issues at stake between Soviet and American national interests are in principle negotiable, in which stability in Eastern Europe, which the Soviet Union desperately wants, is traded for some sort of moving but partly stabilized settlement in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, which we desperately need. I think I recognize all the enormous and protracted problems of any negotiation with the Communist powers, and the infinite patience and persistence necessary in seeking out common interests and in persuading our adversaries that we share some aims even while differing on others. We ourselves will find it difficult to do this if we are irrevocably committed to believing that all immediate Soviet objectives are simply gambits in a campaign for world domination; and it seems to me the task of American policy to explore the possibility that the residual ideological dynamism in Soviet Communism does not entirely foreclose the possibility of interim, partial agreements whose result would be to curb the ambitious and the incautious both in the Soviet Union and in the United States. If by "East" one means the Soviet Union, I believe agreement is madt still more difficult by the fact that each of the two great powers has allies who profit from heightened tension. But Communist China is another story entirely and here I am not

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sanguine even in principle, for the ideology and fanaticism of the Chinese have not been dimmed by history or thawed by western contact.

However that may be, lack of faith within America in the attractiveness, political acumen, and economic viability of our society in a situation of disarmament leads to the belief that in a disarmed world Communism would win out. Such a view, while common on both sides of the Iron Curtain, does not take account of the many defeats Communism has suffered through its own arrogances and stupidities, which run counter to the nationalism, pride, and desire of many of the new countries, and the slow awakening of many people everywhere to Communist belligerence, thought-control, and imperialism. It is urgently important for us to show that the American economy is capable of disarmament while maintaining full employment, and it would seem in the interest of big business as well as of the whole society to make very concrete studies as to the reallocation of resources and, where necessary, of whole industries. A vigorous Western program of internal development, coupled with aid to the new countries, might eventually drive home the lesson that there is more than one route to industrialization and modernization, and that new routes, scarcely dreamed of as yet, remain to be invented. When many intellectuals in the underdeveloped countries now turn to Communism, they do so in part because they feel it is the only way of overcoming vested interests and age-old corruptions; some indeed are attracted precisely by the apparent purity of Chinese Communism. Yet on the whole I believe that men turn to totalitarian "solutions" out of desperation, when less oppressive alternatives seem unavailable. Generosity, openness, spontaneity, and pluralism in the American tradition have a greater appeal—sometimes to the very same people who also are tempted by Communism and who are in doubt both as to what they seek and as to what they are. In a disarmed world, the United States would appear less threatening to such countries as Japan, where not even conservatives have forgotten Hiroshima, and perhaps the Peace Corps could eventually be seen for what it is—a mission developed out of the best American traditions—and not as a cold war instrument. The military-industrial complex about which President Eisenhower warned in his farewell address would no longer weigh on the American economy and the American

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spirit; and resourcefulness might be forthcoming to achieve full employment free of the combined spur and soporific of the permanent war economy. Thus both domestic and international prospects could become less oppressive, and America might once more seek to be a hope for the world, not only a defender but a discoverer.

I can even imagine a world in which the United States and the Soviet Union, as two great powers with much to save, would seek to cooperate in the industrialization of Red China—though I find it much harder still to imagine Red China's compliance with any such plan. Even now, however, in the U.N. and elsewhere, the United States and the Soviet Union have sometimes tacitly cooperated toward the stability, brittle as it is, of the status quo.

7. There are a great many Americans who are so completely devoid of imagination, or in some few cases so vindictive, that they say "let's drop a few bombs and get it over with;" and if one then asks, suppose they drop bombs on us, the answer is either that our bombs are better than theirs, or a still jaunty, "well, let's get it over with anyway." Among more reflective people I've heard it said many times that nuclear war is only different in degree from earlier forms of war, and that freedom must be defended by readiness to use all available weapons in the tradition of resistance stretching back to Thermopylae. For the first time in history, the male animal, whether one regards him as heroic or fanatical, has the power not only to destroy himself but also the female of the species; this is one of those cases where quantity turns into quality, and a megaton is not simply a thousand kilotons.

The steps toward disarmament that one might take obviously involve political as well as technical problems, and I am myself unsure as to the best road. I am sympathetic with all roads which might overcome present inertia and would like to see both a test ban and experimental zones of disengagement; I am even prepared to accept the argument of those who say that we should begin disarming with conventional weapons, holding on to nuclear ones as a kind of insurance until the very last moment when some kind of world law and order take over. I say this despite my realization that nuclear weapons (and the other less talked-of weapons of total war, including the bacteriological and the chemical) seem to me in their very nature suicidal and self-defeating. The countries that possess such weapons

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often in fact feel more insecure than those that don't—and this insecurity will grow as the totalist Chinese, the science-minded Israelis, and the West German strong men such as Strauss get into the act. The release of atomic energy that might have given man new confidence in his powers to understand nature and to overcome poverty has turned into a nightmare from which we can only awaken by unrelenting efforts to overcome the sense of frustration that makes so many Americans willing to consider nuclear war. (Since *Partisan Review* does not circulate in the USSR I do not speak here to its leaders and led.)

We learned the art of total war from the Nazis and bettered them at it. Like your former editor, Dwight McDonald, I was opposed to the mass bombings of German and Japanese cities in the Second World War. Today millions of Americans are so lacking in compassion and good sense that they accept the policy which requires that, after our country has been devastated, our missiles and bombers will proceed to destroy the enemy's country (hopefully, in the mad "capitalist" dream of the neutron bomb, leaving property intact). Those who advocate so-called tactical nuclear weapons of a counter-force sort avoid this savagery but impair the important line that divides conventionally terrible war from genocide. Frequently those who ask whether "the issues at stake in the cold war [are] so decisive as to be worth a nuclear war" have made wholly insufficient efforts to explore non-nuclear alternatives to strengthening the position of democracy and freedom in the world. When some assume that recovery from nuclear war will not be much more difficult than Japanese recovery after World War II, such thinking fails to grasp the tragic elements in that recovery or the extent to which it depended on the undestroyed parts of Japan and help from America. Even more, such thinking completely misses the immeasurable differences between even the mass bombings to which people became accustomed over a period of many months and the inconceivable damage to civilized life among the shattered and scattered survivors of the callousness and complacency that found no way out save nuclear war. And it is one of the many ironies of the nuclear age that the very effort to defend against its dangers through a program of building fallout shelters may actually enhance those dangers, both by escalating the arms race in cooperation with the other side, and by falsely

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reassuring some American leaders and citizens that we can afford nuclear brinkmanship because we have taken out insurance, when in fact the only real insurance lies in an eventual dismantling of the weapons of genocide. To the people on this crowded island, as perhaps also in Great Britain, the current shelter boom in America seems cowardly rather than virile—and frightening and more than a little crazy to bystanders. I have never been convinced that totalitarian governments are here to stay, whatever their own boasts or the fears of their enemies, and I share the concern of George Kennan and many others for finding ways of combatting totalitarian government without resort to totalitarian weapons. I believe that, if in spite of all we manage to survive the next years without war, the want of imagination and ingenuity among ourselves that makes slogans like "Red or dead" attractive will be replaced by a fresher, less menacing vision of the human enterprise.

HAROLD ROSENBERG

The cold war is a delusionary struggle between real interests. We affirm everyone's right to the advantages of freedom, they to the advantages of socialism. Freedom and socialism being both good things, the world is in danger of being blown up out of altruism.

Why blown up? Freedom could win the world without a blow if "the West" were really fighting for it. So could socialism if that's what the Soviets were after. Would any people reject a program of making available the resources of society for the free self-development of themselves and their neighbors? But what else is freedom and what else is socialism? The joke of the cold war is that each of the rivals is aware that the other's idea would be irresistible if it were actually put into practice. Whoever first demonstrates that he means what he says gets the prize. Each knows, however, that there is no danger of this happening, and is therefore not afraid to twit the other about the opportunities he is missing. "Think of where you'd be today," the West nudges Moscow, "if, instead of suppressing insurrections in East Berlin and Hungary, you opened the Iron Curtain

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and had workers pouring out to tell their comrades in other countries what a glorious life they are building through their ownership and control of the means of production." "Very funny," growls Echo from behind the Curtain. "And a tough time you'd be having in Latin America or Africa if your enthusiasm for individual liberty caused you to use that tremendous power and productive capacity of yours to free people from poverty and from oppression by the Trujillos, the Francos and the French *colons*."

Yet the hostile propaganda of each side against the other is not altogether true either. It is too simple to say that the West cherishes capitalism not freedom and that the Soviets cynically mask their totalitarianism in Socialist phrases. The ideals of a society, which reflect the revolution that originally brought it into being, are serious factors in the formation of events. The West wants freedom to the extent that freedom is compatible with private ownership and with profits; the Soviets want socialism to the extent that socialism is compatible with the dictatorship of the Communist bureaucracy. In both instances, the "issues" for which they fight mean something, but what they mean is modified by the presence of a concrete self-interest.

Is the modified issue a valid issue? Is the preservation of the capitalist self-interest as greatly in the interest of everyone as the preservation of freedom? That the matter is arguable is indicated by PR's question 4. Nobody knows to what degree the freedom we value is tied to the capitalist mode of freedom. It is a subject for debate and experiment.

Assuming that we are, above all, devoted to freedom we might re-phrase the problem. What is the extent to which the expansion of freedom is consistent with profits (and the realization of socialism with the rule of the Communist Party)? If these questions could be answered it might be possible to develop an effective reformist politics in both the USA and the USSR. A U.S. party, whether in power or in loyal opposition, could say: We advocate going thus far with freedom, then it must be slowed to a halt in order to protect capitalist interests. The same with a Soviet party, just so far with socialism then stopped to protect the interests of the C.P. leadership. Such a politics of pursuing stated values while maintaining the status quo could be genuinely conservative *and peaceful.*

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But conservatism of this kind has not been achieved on either side. Instead of conservatives, the U.S. has greedy, disgraceful little Birchers and sophists of privilege, to whom the history of freedom means only what it has left in their pockets; while the Soviets have Stalinists, to whom socialism *is* the interests of the Party. People blind to the limits of their ideas and aware only of what they want are the opposite of conservative. Lacking a true conservatism, both sides keep insisting hypocritically on the purity of their positions and fly into frenetic reflexes when revolutions challenge their fictions.

As against these conservatives seeking to save both their values and the systems that presently support them, there might be radicals whose view would be: freedom for everyone all the way and the hell with it. Or: socialism now and out with the fat boys. Between radicals on both sides there could also be peace, since the radicals are going toward each other from opposite ends of the tunnel: revolutions in the twentieth century are for freedom *and* socialism.

The cold war is the product of people who are neither radicals nor conservatives and who therefore feel threatened by every revolutionary event, to which their own limits have contributed. Today, both East and West are run by "liberals" who would like to serve the ideal of freedom, on one side, and that of socialism, on the other. The Western liberals are for revolutions against tyranny but when such a revolution shows its socialist outline they complain that the revolution has gotten off the track; while the Moscow anti-Stalinists are for revolutions against capital but when the revolution shows its libertarian side they denounce it as reactionary.

In this perspective we leap to PR's last question, the only one which can be answered briefly: "Do you think the issues at stake in the cold war so decisive as to be worth a nuclear war?" To answer Yes to this question one must have lost his mind. Among the war-willing on the "Radical Right" many suspect they are mad and out of fear of being locked up direct part of their belligerence against state legislation to control mental illness, the National Association for Mental Health and the World Health Organization of the U.N. The lunatics on the "Left" are not so modest, I mean those liberal professors and politicians who demonstrate their "realism" and rocklike determination by crying, Better the Bomb than—

Better the Bomb than slavery? Imagine enslaving 180,000,000

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Americans by force of arms. Khrushchev cannot tell China what to do, cannot tell Albania what to think. But 180,000,000 Americans, born and brought up in the conviction of their uniqueness, of being as good as the next guy and no crap from anybody, are so menaced in their independence that it would be worth forty million or more corpses to protect them. What a patriotic image! What faith in one's country and its traditions!

Americans can lose their freedom only from within. I agree with the Birchers: if there's a Communist menace it's under the skin. If it's not found there it doesn't exist. The Communists can no more deprive us of freedom (the fear of intellectuals today) than they could bring us socialism (the hope of intellectuals twenty-five years ago). They can provide a model from which Americans can learn how to deprive themselves of freedom through a collectivism which is the enemy of the individual. Our strategists of anti-Communism have been studying this model eagerly since the cold war began.

In sum, there is a Communist antagonist. But having an antagonist does not mean that you must be ready for murder and suicide. An antagonist does not threaten your being, as a menace does—your own character may even be heightened by his presence. There was a Communist antagonist in 1938 but the menace then was the Nazis. Today the menace is nuclear war. To abate this menace a realistic politics is essential, a politics which would get rid once and for all of the fraud of freedom versus socialism and put ideals and facts on the table.

ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.

1. *Has the west been winning or losing the cold war?* This formulation, in my judgment, oversimplifies the actual problem. Either there will be a hot war, in which case everyone will lose; or else there will be a protracted, see-saw competition, in which case that side will 'win' which can deal most adequately with the processes of modernization. I have no doubt that the open society will ultimately win this competition. The reason for my confidence is that, if the

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world avoids thermonuclear war, the processes of modernization, contrary to Marxist prophecy, will vindicate the mixed society and render Communism obsolete.

The Marxist contention has been (a) that capitalism will be an inevitable casualty of the modernization process, and (b) that Communism will be its inevitable fulfillment. In these terms Communism has claimed the certification of history. But history quite clearly refutes the Communist case. It shows (a) that the mixed society, as it modernizes itself, can overcome the internal contradictions which in Marx's view doomed it to destruction; and (b) that Communism is historically relevant to the preliminary rather than to the concluding stages of the modernization process.

Marx rested his case for the inevitable Communist triumph on the theory that capitalism contained the seeds of its own destruction. He argued that the capitalist economy generated inexorable inner tendencies—'contradictions'—which would infallibly bring about its downfall. One inexorable tendency was the increasing wealth of the rich and the increasing poverty of the poor. Another was the increasing frequency and magnitude of economic crisis. Together these tendencies would carry society to a point of revolutionary 'ripeness' when the proletariat would rise in its wrath, overthrow the possessing classes and install a classless society. Marx saw no way of arresting this process, because the capitalist state could never be anything but the 'executive committee' of the capitalist class.

This was Marx's fatal error. The capitalist state in developed societies, far from being the helpless instrument of the possessing class, has been the means by which other classes of society have redressed the balance of social power against those whom Hamilton called the 'rich and well-born.' This has been true in the United States, for example, since the age of Jackson. The liberal democratic state has accomplished two things in particular. It has brought about a redistribution of wealth which has defeated Marx's prediction of progressive immiseration; and it has brought about an economic stabilization which has defeated Marx's prediction of ever-intensifying economic crisis. What the democratic parties of the developed nations have done, in short, has been to use the state to force capitalism to do what both the classical capitalists and the Marxists had said was impossible: to control the business cycle and to reapportion in-

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come in favor of the lower classes. As a result, capitalism can no longer be relied upon to dig its own grave.

At the same time, experience throws new light on the historical role of Communism. Marx, regarding Communism as the climax of the modernization process, expected that it would come about first in the most developed nations. On the contrary, it has come about in nations in the early phases of development, like Russia and China; and it has appealed to such nations precisely because they see it as an instrument of rapid and effective modernization. Instead of being the culmination of the modernization effort, as Marx contended, Communism would seem to be a form of social organization to which states aspiring to development have resorted in the hope that it will shorten the modernization process. We do not know what would happen in a fully developed society; but, if Communism should survive in its present form, it would be because of the efficiency of its apparatus of terror, not because it is the inevitable expression of the institutions of affluence.

History thus shows plainly that Communism is *not* the wave of the future, *not* the form of social organization toward which all societies are irresistibly evolving. Rather Communism is a phenomenon of the transition from stagnation to development, a 'disease' (in Rostow's phrase) of the modernization process. Democratic, regulated capitalism—the mixed society—will be far more capable of coping with the long-term consequences of modernization.

2. *Should the United States identify itself to a greater degree with the proponents of social reform?* In most of the undeveloped world, the choice is no longer between the *status quo* and change. The imperatives of modernization are irresistible. The choice is between democratic evolution and Communist revolution. Other things being equal, the national interest of the United States lies in supporting those forces which work for modernization along lines which lay the foundations for democracy. (There are special cases, of course, where in the short run the United States may have to aid regressive regimes against even more serious threats to democracy, as it aided the Soviet Union during the Second World War.) The Kennedy administration—in Latin America, for example—is reversing past policies and working to support and strengthen the forces of democratic evolution.

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3. *What about democratic socialism?* I do not know what 'democratic socialism' means any longer. So far as I can see, the so-called 'democratic socialists' have renounced the objectives of classical socialism—i.e., ownership by the state of the means of production and distribution. They have become proponents of a mixed economy. If they derive emotional satisfaction by calling this 'socialism,' this is an act of rhetorical piety which has little relation to reality—and is, indeed, as absurd as those who insist on talking about the American mixed economy as if it were an example of unfettered 'free enterprise.' In 'socialist' India, the state disposes of 13 percent of the gross national product, in 'capitalist' America, the state disposes of 20 percent. Where does this leave the argument between 'socialism' and 'capitalism?'

The question is not one of conforming to abstract models but of meeting practical problems. The way to meet these problems is through a pragmatic selection among the tools at hand. When the United States was an underdeveloped country, we had a large share of public direction and enterprise; we became fanatical laissez-fairists only *after* the period of take-off. We can assume that underdevolped countries today will similarly resort to state action before take-off. Calling state action 'socialism' is only one more example of the use of words to conceal realities—and this time an example cherished alike by old-fashioned socialists and old-fashioned capitalists. The hard fact is that the world has moved beyond both classical socialism and classical capitalism, and addiction to the old words is an expression of arrested intellectual development. Here, as everywhere, dogmatic ideology is the enemy.

4. *Are western values dependent on existing western political and economic arrangements?* We are defending, I take it, the values of individual dignity and freedom which are the basis and the aspiration of the open society. In general, history suggests that these values have the best chance of flourishing when political and economic power is diversified rather than concentrated. If this is so, then a free society must have freedom of political opposition; and freedom of political opposition is more likely to exist when there are varieties of economic ownership. However, one can not conclude that all nations must adopt western forms of mixed enterprise and parliamentary democracy. Every country must develop responsible institutions in terms of its own traditions and values.

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5. *What has been the effect of the cold war on western political thought?* Good—insofar as it has led to a reappraisal of the sources of democratic energy; bad—insofar as it has encouraged misguided efforts to produce an ideology for the West as rigid and comprehensive as the ideology of the Communists themselves.

6. *Are the objectives of East and West ultimately negotiable?* So long as Communism remains committed to a belief in the infallibility of certain doctrines, states, parties and leaders, there can be no genuine peace in the world. However, one can conceive the achievement of a state of inspected truce which would represent a great improvement over the present cold war. If we could attain such a truce, I am confident, as I said earlier, that the West could win a genuine competition of ideas. But it must be remembered that a genuine competition requires that Western ideas be as accessible in the Communist world as Communist ideas are in the Western world. The day that Western publications are as freely available in Russia and China as Communist publications are in Britain and the United States is the day when I will begin to believe Communist talk about peaceful coexistence. That day, I fear, is still far off.

7. *Better red than dead?* I reject the notion that this is our choice. And I believe that until we have a reliable system of general and complete disarmament, continued military preparedness is an essential part of the policy to keep the choices from narrowing. Unilateral disarmament, in my view, is the shortest way to make the red-dead choice a reality.

C. P. SNOW

1. The West has been approximately holding its own, or more exactly, losing the cold war at a much slower rate than one might have expected. This is mainly because advanced countries (i.e. the United States and most of Western Europe) have made a pretty good go at modified capitalism. The basic trouble is, of course, with under-developed countries. To such countries modified capitalism seems intolerably hard to work. It is very difficult for the West,

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in its present condition of prosperity, to begin to understand how a peasant country thinks. This is even true of a country as sophisticated as India. India is the test case of the present world.

2. The U.S. is the richest and most privileged country on earth. It is dangerous, and probably in the long run fatal, for the U.S. to associate itself with pockets of privilege in less advanced societies. This has happened, and has done great damage. In emerging countries there is a tendency, even for people not ill-disposed to the U.S., to regard America as the centre of world conservatism. The U.S. could survive for a long time in this position, but not in a way that those of us who love you would wish to see.

3. Not much, I think, except as an intermediary or an interpreter. The real world dialogue seems to be between liberal capitalism (symbolized by Kennedy and to some extent by English figures such as Iain Macleod) and emerging Communism (symbolised by Khrushchev and more precisely by the younger men of the Soviet thought—Adzhubei and writers like Tvardovsky). Each of these major concentrations of power will suffer major pressure from more extreme forces—the extreme right in the West, the Stalinists in the East. It is difficult to see how in the next two decades democratic socialism can, in these circumstances, perform a primary function.

4. The West has been very lucky. We have been able to spread considerable prosperity over largish populations, particularly in the U.S. Linked with this prosperity are certain values and liberties, some of great importance. It is probable that the fringe countries of North-Western Europe (Scandinavia, Holland, Great Britain) have reached a higher degree of political and civil liberty than any societies in history. I don't think anyone knows how inextricably these liberties depend on our existing political, social and economic institutions.

5. Disastrous. I have no doubt the cold war has done the West more harm than the East. It has stifled our social imaginations. Without our knowing, we think less freely than we did thirty years ago. Often we have to shut off our insight. In England at least, no social thinker of any power has emerged since the war.

6. Either the objectives are negotiable or, following Ivan Karamazov, I return God my ticket. For the alternative is nuclear war. Further, unless we achieve some sort of nuclear disarmament, again

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the alternative is nuclear war. I am not thinking of the next five years, but of something like ten to twenty years ahead. I believe that if there were such disarmament, the West's prospects could be relatively good. That is, I can imagine the whole American continent, Western Europe, perhaps India and parts of Africa, surviving as good societies even when the Communist societies are much further along the road.

7. No.

DENNIS H. WRONG

The cold war both in fact and in name originated in Europe as a result of the presence of Soviet power in the heart of the continent after the Second World War. It shortly acquired a world-wide aspect, something that was easily forseeable, especially after the victory of the Chinese Communists, but which still surprises and horrifies the short-sighted as first Africa and then Latin America are apparently drawn into its orbit. Insofar as the cold war means "peaceful" competition between rival social and political systems, the West is not merely winning but has already won in Europe. The Soviet leaders have recently resorted to crude nuclear diplomacy in the hope of reversing the outcome of the political and economic struggle. If they succeed, the intrinsic appeal of Soviet Communism will have had little to do with the result, although this may be small consolation. The very features of Communist totalitarianism which account for its failures in peaceful competition enable it to exploit the fear of nuclear war in ways that cannot be matched by the United States and its allies. Consideration of Europe, raises the chilling issues of arms and nuclear policy rather than "winning the cold war," which has relevance only to the underdeveloped countries.

The Communists obviously possess immense advantages in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Their ideological messianism, the reality of their achievements in forcibly and brutally modernizing backward countries, and the lack of an overseas imperialist past on the part of Russia and China combine to permit a many-sided appeal to

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revolutionary nationalist movements at opposite ends of the world and to different groups, from Westernized intellectuals to racially proud tribal leaders, within emerging nations. Errors of American policy have certainly compounded these advantages. New policies are likely to have the greatest effect in Latin America. The United States can afford no more Guatemalas, no more Cuban invasions, no more open or tacit support of unpopular dictators. Since the Cuban blunder, American help in forestalling a return to power of the Trujillo family and readiness to consider economic aid to the Jagan government in British Guiana suggest that some lessons have been learned. Perhaps we shall never fully know whether Cuba willingly joined the Communist bloc, using various hostile but by no means consistent American actions as a pretext, or whether these actions in light of America's discreditable past record led Castro to believe he had no alternative. The United States has much to live down in South America, particularly in the Caribbean area, but the very economic and political power so long exercised there, linking Latin American societies to the United States by multiple ties, makes it possible for changed policies to have a real impact.

I have never been persuaded that altered American policies would have as great an effect elsewhere in the underdeveloped world as their advocates have suggested. If the United States devoted a sum comparable to its present defense budget to capital transfers to underdeveloped areas, no doubt American popularity would greatly increase, but such a policy almost presupposes disarmament and the end of the military phase of the cold war. The withdrawal of American support from elderly dictators and ancient traditional autocracies might induce some of the new neutral nations to become a little more neutral in spirit. But the wistful insistence of some liberals that the American revolutionary past and our traditional anti-colonialism would enable us to compete successfully with the Communists if only we changed our clients and our rhetoric is hardly convincing. Self-determination is no longer a goal but an achievement in most of the non-Soviet world, and individual liberty and institutional, as distinct from populist, democracy mean as little to the new nations at this stage as free enterprise or opposition to "Godlessness."

Is this really a cause for agonized concern? The notion that the cold war creates an American interest in every sparrow that falls

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anywhere in the world must be abandoned. In time we may learn to regard neutralism not merely as a lesser evil but as a positive good. Even a neutralism that is on many issues slanted towards Moscow or Peiping is not necessarily a disaster. There is bound to be much that is ugly in the political life of the new nations; what we should hope for is that they retain sufficient political and economic autonomy and stability to leave open plural possibilities of development, including one that may eventually result in a greater concern for democratic institutions and libertarian values than is possible at the present. Such an objective precludes direct Russian or Chinese domination and the imposition of a rigid totalitarian pattern modeled on the Communist dictatorships of the sort that appear to be evolving in Cuba. Yet we can tolerate even the latter so long as it is confined to small nations; their experience may indeed have a valuable cautionary effect on the larger underdeveloped countries. Military alliances with the new nations have no relevance at all to these objectives except in areas immediately adjacent to Russia and China, which are likely to be indefensible anyway. (I still think the Korean war was at the time necessary, but it cannot be repeated). Nor should we feel on the defensive if American institutions and values are not widely admired and emulated so long as genuine national independence and a modicum of flexibility in the political and social structure remain realities.

We should help all underdeveloped countries to achieve the economic and technical progress they seek, remembering, however, that lavish benevolence may sometimes be as injurious to the spirit of peoples as exploitation, indifference and even domination. A trade policy ensuring more favorable terms to primary producers may in the long-run help encourage in some areas an economic development that proceeds within a stable—or stabilizing—cultural and institutional context more effectively than the sort of world TVA directed by the West that attracts so many liberals and radicals. Also, what the United States *is* has an importance that is sometimes as great as what it *does,* although hardly as great as is claimed by those on the Left who argue that the achievement of racial equality and democratic socialism at home will also "win" the cold war.

The rise of the underdeveloped continents has coincided with a new bi-polar balance of power in Europe, or the "Atlantic Community," in which our antagonist espouses an intolerant secular salva-

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tionist creed. The response of the West to this total conjunction of circumstances has hardly been adequate. Yet is it so obvious that the "advance of Communism" has been the central fact of the past decade? All through the fifties we were assured by the well-informed that first one and then another Middle Eastern country was about to fall under Communist control and even that the whole area would be incorporated into the Soviet bloc within a few years. In the last few years Communist influence has clearly declined rather than increased at the same time that Western power has retreated and several old-fashioned oligarchies have crumbled. India, Burma and Ceylon have never been less susceptible to Communist infiltration since they achieved independence than they are today. Indonesia and several smaller Southeastern Asian nations hang on in the face of direct Russian and Chinese pressures in the area. The new African nations are at the same stage of vulnerability to Communist influence as the Asian nations were a decade ago. Their more acute racial sensitivities undoubtedly leave the West less margin for retrievable error. And this is even truer of Latin America where the United States is directly involved and where the symbols of political independence were won long ago, making the content of nationalism an issue open to exploitation by Castro-like movements. Yet much that has happened throughout the underdeveloped world might have happened anyway and I am not convinced that the Communists have been able to turn it so greatly to their advantage.

If a lesser sense of urgency about the underdeveloped world is desirable, we need—at least in the United States—a far greater sense of urgency about the prospect of nuclear war. I do not think that the issues at stake in the cold war are worth a nuclear war. Nor were any of the issues in past conflicts, except from the possible standpoint of a general belief in extra-terrestrial immortality that today no longer exists. There have been occasions in the past when the willingness of a people to fight to the death for their tribe, nation or civilization was itself a positive moral quality to be weighed in any final assessment of the value of their culture and institutions. But when readiness to consider war means acceptance of the certainty of mass death, a certainty that is purely technological, and the possibility that there may be no survivors as well as the total destruction of the material fabric of civilization, such an evaluation loses all meaning. A slogan

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like "better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees" is terrifyingly inappropriate when applied to nuclear war. Past communities which chose to fight even when defeat and death seemed certain were at least implicated in a human encounter in which the bravery of the victim responded to the cruelty of the slaughterer. But the rhetoric of courage and cowardice, steadfastness and defeatism, has no relevance to the mechanical obliteration of millions in a few seconds. To believe that it does, leads to an acceptance of the possibility of nuclear war that can only make it more probable.

But to say that nothing would justify a nuclear war is to say less than meets the eye. Except for ruling out a first strike, such a statement has little political meaning. In practice, which is to say in politics, the abstract declaration "better red than dead" is likely to mean choosing the near-certainty of Communist world domination over the probability that nuclear war would cease to be a threat for a few decades, at least until divisions among the Communist powers fully developed. Short of technical amnesia or world government with a nuclear arms monopoly, mankind is going to have to live with some degree of risk of nuclear destruction from now on. The present problem is what sort of balance to strike between the risk of nuclear war and the risk of Communist expansion, for to give top priority to reducing the former is not to nullify the latter.

General disarmament is obviously the best solution. We must never stop trying to negotiate it since we have every reason to believe that avoidance of nuclear war ranks first in the Communists' scale of priorities as well as in ours. Their ultimate political aims, however, are non-negotiable and as long as they think they can advance these aims by arousing a greater fear of nuclear war in others than they themselves feel, disarmament will be hard to achieve. On our side the point may soon be reached—we may have reached it now—where the armaments race so increases the risk of nuclear war that we can only reduce it by increasing the risk of Communist expansion. I do not believe that politicians can go on acting as if nuclear war were a possible means to our objectives and remain firm in the determination to avoid it, particularly when they are not insulated from irresponsibly belligerent popular pressures which they cannot help feeding themselves in order to convince the enemy of our will to resist. The recent frightening nonsense about fall-out shelters is a

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case in point. How many people, even among top policy-makers, can persist in coolly regarding a civil defense program as a mere show to persuade the Russians of our firmness of intention? We have to make the Russians believe that our responses are at the very least unpredictable, but we appear able to do so only by creating a situation in which they really become unpredictable and spread confusion. The situation of the Soviet leaders is probably not so very different, despite their more highly centralized control over their society.

I doubt whether the Soviet leaders would unleash a nuclear first strike or take any military action of any kind against a vital Western interest so long as we retained the capacity to kill millions of Russians in a single blow, even if our retaliatory destructive capacity fell behind theirs with the result that nuclear war would mean total death for us and no more than terrible injury to them. I may be mistaken in this belief, but at the present time the only balance between risks I am able to strike in my own mind is to favor an end to the weapons race without American abandonment of the nuclear deterrent, even if the capabilities of the deterrent should as a result become less absolute and below Russian capabilities. We can begin by ceasing all testing, preparing to dismantle part of our military and industrial nuclear establishment and continuing to work for a general nuclear disarmament agreement.

It is hard for anyone under forty whose entire intellectual history does not predate the Second World War to assess the effects of the cold war on political thought and speculation. My immediate reaction, in opposition to what the editors' question seems to suggest, is to say that political thought and and speculation have been greatly stimulated and have become far less parochial than at any time since the beginning of this century, even though our sense of political possibility has clearly contracted. The effort to understand totalitarianism, and the light it has appeared to shed—though sometimes reflected too luridly—even on the fairly remote past, has added a new dimension to political thought. We have only begun to explore the politics of economic development and the new kinds of interaction between nationalism and its social and cultural setting in the rising non-Western nations. Were the 1930's so rich in political *thought* as distinct from action and ideological affirmation?

Yet speculation about possibilties within Western society today

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takes place in an "as if" spirit which brackets, or thinks away, the fact of the cold war. The unreal quality of such thought has become intolerable in the past few years to a new intellectual generation, with the result that the conditions and necessities of the cold war itself are indiscriminately denounced out of impulses very different from those that moved some of the new generation's older mentors who never fully surrendered their earlier illusions about Soviet Communism. It is as hard not to sympathize with these impulses as it is to accept the view of things they so often dictate. The promising beginnings of the "New Left" in both Europe and America have been diverted into campaigns against nuclear war and a revolutionary romanticism inspired by Castro's Cuba. British "new leftists" have even argued, not that Western democratic socialism may have some relevance to the problems of the underdeveloped world, but that Western socialists, including the British Labor Party, can learn lessons applicable to their own national experience from Castro's brand of authoritarian populism! As for campaigns against nuclear war, a peace movement that became truly political rather than merely agitational might prevent the possibility of a disastrous "dialectic of the extremes" on the issues of war and peace.

Suspended between a past from which we have withdrawn belief and a future which has lost its power to attract, we live in a present where the values we cherish are formal or procedural: freedom, cultural creativity, personal individuality, social pluralism, democratic government. Can these values flourish when the actual content we give them in daily life is so constricted and draws so heavily on private meanings incapable of wider generalization? Can freedom become an innovating and revolutionary belief, rather than one that is merely defensive, only to people who are deprived of it? I can't answer these questions, but the need for an exploratory Utopianism suggesting direct political action in at least some areas of our life is real. This is the value of a "politics as if" and we cannot afford to condemn it either as dangerous apathy in the face of the nuclear threat nor as irresponsible disaffiliation from the cold war.

There will be further discussion of these issues in future numbers of PR. Comments are invited.

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POEMS

EYE AND TOOTH

My whole eye was sunset red,
the old cut cornea throbbed,
I saw things darkly,
as through an unwashed goldfish globe.

I lay all day on my bed.
I chain-smoked through the night,
learning to flinch
at the flash of the matchlight.

Outside, the summer rain,
a simmer of rot and renewal,
fell in pinpricks.
Even new life is fuel.

My eyes throb.
Nothing can dislodge
the house where my first tooth
hung in a noose from the doorknob.

Nothing can dislodge
the triangular blotch
of rot on the red roof,
a cedar hedge, or the shade of a hedge.

No ease from the eye
of the sharp-shinned hawk in the birdbook there,
with reddish brown buffalo hair
on its shanks, one ascetic talon

clasping the abstract Victorian sky.
It says:

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an eye for an eye,
a tooth for a tooth.

No ease for the boy at the keyhole,
his telescope,
when the women's bodies flashed in the bathroom.
Young, my eyes began to fail.

Nothing! No oil
for the eye, nothing to pour
on those waters or flames.
I am tired. Everyone's tired of my turmoil.

ALFRED CORNING CLARK

(1916-1961)

You read the *New York Times*
every day at recess,
but in its dry
obituary, a list
of your wives, nothing is news,
except the ninety-five
thousand dollar engagement ring
you gave the sixth.
Poor rich boy,
you were unreasonably adult
at taking your time.
You died at forty-five.
Poor Al Clark,
behind your enlarged,
hardly recognizable photograph,
I feel the pain.
You were alive. You are dead.
You wore bow-ties and dark
blue coats, and sucked
wintergreen or cinnamon lifesavers

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to sweeten your breath.
There must be something—
some one to praise
your triumphant diffidence,
your refusal of exertion,
the intelligence
that pulsed in the sensitive,
pale concavities of your forehead.
You never worked,
and were third in the class.
I owe you something—
I was absurd,
you were too bored,
quick and cool to laugh.
You are dear to me, Alfred;
our reluctant souls united
in our unconventional,
illegal
games of chess
on the St. Mark's quadrangle.
You usually won—
motionless
as a lizard in the sun.

Robert Lowell

FRONTENAC

Hearing from some how the Sierra answers
Even today, to John Muir's nails and rifle
With human resonances,
I heard the long-tamed wilderness give back
Over the Lake and all too British Kingston
The one word, "Frontenac."
But after-echoes mocked: The rocky flanges

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Of the Thousand Islands
Have more to do than take up challenges
From perfect strangers;
Agoraphobia among empty spaces,
The mountain ranges, the plains of corn,
Peoples the street at history's intersections
With famous faces.

Heart of Midlothian, the milky mother
(Sir Walter's Doric) of sane masterpieces
Fed at that flaccid udder, Walter Scott,
Great lax geometer, first plotted them,
Triangulations that explode
The architect's box of space, and by a torsion
As bland as violent sprain
Narrative time and the archives' single slot.

What's to be seen of old Fort Frontenac?
The British fortress, by a hundred years
More recent, but still Old
Fort Henry, draws the Buick. Of the Frenchman
A mound remains by Kingston's waterfront
And a cadence out of Parkman: "At Versailles
A portrait, beautiful and young, Minerva . . ."

Intervals in what never meets the eye
Meet the ear sooner, music's images
Not of Ontario's spaces but of spaces
Sketched by a gesture, virtual and French.

Alas for Caliban. The Thousand Islands
Were full of noises,
Landscape and history echoing back and forth
Under immense skies, till his master
Cabined his spaces in a folio
And Euclids of the tepee, leaning-to
Birch-pole isosceles in a glade of hemlocks,
Drank deafening whisky in a written treaty.

Donald Davie

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ALL MY DEAR DEAD

There were leopards blowing down the mountain,
I and the sky and the autumn
And the azure and the crimson;
It was a day for wonders.
There were tree crowns marching by the million
Prisons were suddenly tumbled
(I and my bleeding shadow)
Tag-ends of dreams were banished
Seraphim in branches thundered
(I carrying my loveload
I and my yesterdays)
When the whole gold presence blazed.

Then all my dear dead arose and vanished
They were free of my jailer heart,
A kite string strained, I loosed it into sun-moted heaven—
They were gone, they belonged to themselves; at last we had parted;
Light as milkweed silk they blew on their separate ways,
(It was a day for wonders)
In the harvest flame, through the translucent haze.

Lenore G. Marshall

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Bernard Malamud

STILL LIFE

Months after vainly seeking a studio on the vie Margutta, del Babuino, della Croce, and elsewhere in that neighborhood, Arthur Fidelman settled for part of a crowded, windowy, attic-like atelier on a cobbled street in the Trastevere, strung high with sheets and underwear. He had, a week before, in "personal notices" in the American language newspaper in Rome, read: "Studio to share, cheap, many advantages, etc., A. Oliovino," and after much serious anguish, (the curt advertisement having recalled dreams he had dreamed were dead) many indecisions, enunciations and renunciations, Fidelman had, one very cold late-December morning, hurried to the address given, a worn four-story building with a yellowish façade stained brown along the edges. On the top floor, in a thickly cluttered artist's studio smelling aromatically of turpentine and oil paints, the inspiring sight of an easel lit in unwavering light from the three large windows setting the former art student on fire once more to paint, he had dealt not with a pittore, as expected, but with a pittrice, Annamaria Oliovino.

The pittrice, a thin, almost gaunt, high-voiced, restless type, with short black uncombed hair, violet mouth, distracted eyes and tense neck, a woman with narrow buttocks and piercing breasts, was in her way attractive if not, in truth, beautiful. She had on a thick black woolen sweater, eroded black velveteen culottes, black socks, and leather sandals spotted with drops of paint. Fidelman and she eyed each other stealthily and he realized at once she was, as a woman, indifferent to him or his type, who or which made no difference. But after ten minutes, despite the turmoil she exuded even as she dispassionately answered his hesitant questions, the art student, ever

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a sucker for strange beauty and all sorts of experiences, felt himself involved with and falling for her. Not my deep dish, he warned himself, aware of all the dangers to himself and his renewed desire to create art; yet he was already half in love with her. It can't be, he thought in desperation; but it could. It had happened to him before. In her presence he tightly shut both eyes and wholeheartedly wished against what might be. Really he trembled, and though he labored to extricate his fate from hers, he was already a plucked bird, greased, and ready for frying. Fidelman protested within—cried out severely against the weak self, called himself ferocious names but could do not much, a victim of his familiar response, a too passionate fondness for strangers. So Annamaria, who had advertised a twenty thousand lire monthly rental, in the end doubled the sum, and Fidelman paid through both nostrils, cash for first and last months (should he attempt to fly by night) plus a deposit of ten thousand for possible damages. An hour later he moved in with his imitation leather suitcase. This happened in the dead of winter. Below the cold sunlit windows stood two frozen umbrella pines and beyond, in the near distance, sparkled the icy Tiber.

The studio was well heated, Annamaria had insisted, but the cold leaked in through the wide windows. It was more a blast; the art student shivered but was kept warm by his hidden love for the pittrice. It took him most of a day to clear himself a space to work, about a third of the studio was as much as he could manage. He stacked her canvases five deep against her portion of the walls, curious to examine them but Annamaria watched his every move (he noticed several self-portraits) although she was at the same time painting a monumental natura morta of a loaf of bread with two garlic bulbs ("Pane ed Aglii"). He moved stacks of *Oggi,* piles of postcards and yellowed letters, and a bundle of calendars going back to many years ago; also a Perugina candy box full of broken pieces of Etruscan pottery, one of small sea shells, and a third of medallions of various saints and the Virgin, which she warned him to handle with care. He had uncovered a sagging cot by a dripping stone sink in his corner of the studio and there he slept. She furnished an old chafing dish and a broken table, and he bought a few household things he needed. Annamaria rented the art student an easel for a thousand lire a month. Her quarters were private, a room at the

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other end of the studio whose door she kept locked, handing him the key when he had to use the toilet. The wall was thin and the instrument noisy. He could hear the whistle and rush of her water, and though he tried to be quiet, because of the plumbing the bowl was always brimful and the pour of his stream embarrassed him. At night, if there was need, although he was tempted to use the sink, he fished out the yellowed, sedimented pot under his bed; once or twice, as he was using it in the thick of night, he had the impression she was awake and listening.

They painted in their overcoats, Annamaria wearing a black babushka, Fidelman a green wool hat pulled down over his frozen ears. She kept a pan of hot coals at her feet and every so often lifted a sandaled foot to toast it. The marble floor of the studio was sheer thick ice; Fidelman wore two pairs of tennis socks his sister Bessie had recently sent him from the States. Annamaria, a leftie, painted with a paint-smeared leather glove on her hand, and theoretically his easel had been arranged so that he couldn't see what she was doing but he often sneaked looks at her work. The pittrice, to his surprise, painted with flicks of her fingers and wrists, peering at her performance with almost closed eyes. He noticed she alternated still lifes with huge lyric abstractions—massive whorls of red and gold exploding in all directions, these built on, entwined with, and ultimately concealing, a small black religious cross, her first two brush strokes on every abstract canvas. Once when Fidelman gathered the nerve to ask her why the cross, she answered it was the symbol that gave the painting its meaning.

He was eager to know more but she was impatient. "Eh," she shrugged, "who can explain art?"

Though her response to his various attempts to become better acquainted were as a rule curt, and her voluntary attention to him, shorter still—she was able, apparently, to pretend he wasn't there—Fidelman's feeling for Annamaria grew, and he was as unhappy in love as he had ever been.

But he was patient, a persistent virtue, served her often in various capacities, for instance carrying down four flights of stairs her two bags of garbage after supper—the portinaia was crippled and the portiere never around—sweeping the studio clean each morning, even running to retrieve a brush or paint tube when she happened to drop

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one—offering any service any time, you name it. She accepted these small favors without giving them much notice.

One morning after reading a many-paged letter she had just got in the mail, Annamaria was sad, dark, unable to work; she paced around restlessly, it troubled him. But after feverishly painting a widening purple spiral that continued off the canvas, she regained a measure of repose. This heightened her beauty, lent it somehow a youthful quality it didn't ordinarily have—he guessed her to be no older than twenty-seven or eight; so Fidelman, inspired by the change in her, hoping it might foretoken better luck for him, approached Annamaria, removed his hat and suggested since she went out infrequently why not lunch for a change at the trattoria at the corner, Guido's, where workmen assembled and the veal and white wine were delicious? She, to his surprise, after darting an uneasy glance out of the window at the tops of the motionless umbrella pines, abruptly assented. They ate well and conversed like human beings, although she mostly limited herself to answering his modest questions. She informed Fidelman she had come from Naples to Rome two years ago, although it seemed much longer, and he told her he was from the United States. Being so physically close to her, able to inhale the odor of her body—like salted flowers—and intimately eating together, excited Fidelman, and he sat very still, not to rock the boat and spill a drop of what was so precious to him. Annamaria ate hungrily, her eyes usually lowered. Once she looked at him with a shade of a smile and he felt beatitude; the art student contemplated many such meals though he could ill afford them, every cent he spent saved and sent by Bessie.

After zuppa inglese and a peeled apple she patted her lips with a napkin, and still in good humor, suggested they take the bus to the Piazza del Popolo and visit some painter friends of hers.

"I'll introduce you to Alberto Moravia if he's there."

"With pleasure," Fidelman said, bowing.

But when they stepped into the street and were walking to the bus stop near the river a cold wind blew up and Annamaria turned pale.

"Something wrong?" Fidelman inquired.

"The East Wind," she answered testily.

"East wind?"

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"The Evil Eye," she said with irritation. "Malocchio."

He had heard something of the sort. They returned quickly to the studio, their heads lowered against the noisy wind, the pittrice from time to time furtively crossing herself. A black-habited old nun passed them at the trattoria corner, from whom Annamaria turned in torment, muttering, "Jettatura! Porca miseria!" When they were upstairs in the studio she insisted Fidelman touch his testicles three times, to undo or dispel who knows what witchcraft, and he modestly obliged. Her request had inflamed him although he cautioned himself to remember it was in purpose and essence, theological.

Later she received a visitor, a man who came to see her on Monday and Friday afternoons after his work in a government bureau. Her visitors, always men, whispered with her a minute, then left restlessly; most of them, excepting also Giancarlo Balducci, a crosseyed illustrator—Fidelman never saw again. But the one who came oftenest stayed longest, a solemn gray-haired gent, Augusto Ottogalli, with watery blue eyes and missing side teeth, old enough to be her father for sure. He rakishly wore a black fedora, and a shabby gray overcoat too large for him, greeted Fidelman vacantly and made him inordinately jealous. When Augusto arrived in the afternoon the pittrice usually dropped anything she was doing and they retired to her room, at once locked and bolted. The art student wandered alone in the studio for dreadful hours. When Augusto ultimately emerged, looking disheveled, and if successful, defeated, Fidelman turned his back on him and the old man hastily let himself out of the door. After his visits, and only his, Annamaria did not appear in the studio for the rest of the day. Once when Fidelman knocked on her door to invite her out to supper, she told him to use the pot because she had a headache and was sound asleep. On another occasion when Augusto was locked long in her room with her, after a tormenting two hours Fidelman tiptoed over and put his jealous ear to the door. All he could hear was the buzz and sigh of their whispering. Peeking through the keyhole he saw them both in their overcoats, sitting on her bed, Augusto tightly clasping her hands, whispering passionately, his nose empurpled with emotion, Annamaria's face averted. When the art student checked an hour afterward, they were still at it, the old man imploring, the pittrice weeping. The next time, Augusto came with

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a priest, a portly, heavy-breathing man with a doubtful face. But as soon as they appeared in the studio Annamaria, enraged to fury, despite the impassioned entreatments of Augusto, began to throw at them anything of hers or Fidelman's she could lay her hands on.

"Bloodsuckers!" she shouted, "scorpions! parasites!" until they had hastily retreated. Yet when Augusto, worn and harried, returned alone, without complaint she retired to her room with him.

2.

Fidelman's work, despite the effort and despair he gave it, was going poorly. Everytime he looked at unpainted canvas he saw harlequins, whores, tragic kings, fragmented musicians, the sick and the dread. Still, tradition was tradition and what if he should happen to make more? Since he had always loved art history he considered embarking on a "Mother and Child," but was afraid her image would come out too much Bessie, after all fifteen years between them. Or maybe a moving "Pieta," the dead son's body held like a broken wave in mama's frail arms? A curse on art history—he fought the fully prefigured picture though some of his former best paintings had jumped in every detail to the mind. Yet if so where's engagement? Sometimes I'd like to forget every picture I've seen, Fidelman thought. Almost in panic he sketched in charcoal a coat-tailed "Figure of a Jew Fleeing" and quickly hid it away. After that ideas, prefigured or not, were scarce. "Astonish me," he muttered to himself, wondering whether to return to surrealism. He also considered a series of "Relations to Place and Space," constructions in squares and spirals, the pleasures of tri-dimensional geometry of linear abstraction, only he had little heart for it. The furthest abstraction, Fidelman thought, is a blank canvas. A moment later he asked himself, if painting shows who you are, why should not painting?

After the incident with the priest Annamaria was despondent for a week, stayed in her room sometimes bitterly crying, Fidelman often standing helplessly by her door. However this was a prelude to a burst of creativity by the pittrice. Works by the dozens leaped from her brush and stylus. She continued her lyric abstractions based on the theme of a hidden cross and spent hours with a long black candle, burning holes in heavy white paper ("Buchi Spontanei"). Having mixed coffee grinds, sparkling bits of crushed mirror and

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ground up sea shells, she blew the dust on mucilaged paper ("Velo nella Nebbia"). She composed collages of rags and toilet tissue. After a dozen linear studies ("Linee Discendenti"), she experimented with gold leaf sprayed with umber, the whole while wet combed in long undulations with a fine comb. She framed this in a black frame and hung it on end like a diamond ("Luce di Candela"). Annamaria worked intently, her brow furrowed, small violet mouth pursed, eyes lit, nostrils palpitating in creative excitement. And when she had temporarily run out of new ideas she did a mythological bull in red clay ("La Donna Toro"), afterwards returning to nature morte with bunches of bananas, then self-portraits.

The pittrice occasionally took time out to see what Fidelman was up to, although not much, and then editing his efforts. She changed lines and altered figures, or swabbed paint over whole compositions that didn't appeal to her. There was not much that did, but Fidelman was grateful for any attention she gave his work, and even kept at it to incite her criticism. He could feel his heartbeat in his teeth whenever she stood close to him modifying his work, he deeply breathing her intimate smell of sweating flowers. She used perfume only when Augusto came and it disappointed Fidelman that the old man should evoke the use of bottled fragrance; yet he was cheered that her natural odor which he, so to say, got for free, was so much more exciting than the stuff she doused herself with for her decrepit Romeo. He had noticed she had a bit of soft belly but he loved the pliant roundness and often daydreamed of it. Thinking it might please her, for he pleased her rarely (he reveried how it would be once she understood the true depth of his love for her) the art student experimented with some of the things Annamaria had done—the spontaneous holes, for instance, several studies of "Lines Ascending," and two lyrical abstract expressionistic pieces based on, interwoven with, and ultimately concealing, a Star of David, although for these attempts he soon discovered he had earned, instead of her good will, an increased measure of scorn.

However Annamaria continued to eat lunch with him at Guido's, and more often than not, supper, although she said practically nothing during meals and afterwards let her eyes roam over the men at the other tables. But there were times after they had eaten when she would agree to go for a short walk with Fidelman, if there was no

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serious wind; and once in a while they entered a movie in the Trastevere, for she hated to cross any of the bridges of the Tiber, and then only in a bus, sitting stiffly, staring ahead. As they were once riding, Fidelman seized the opportunity to hold her tense fist in his, but as soon as they were across the river she tore it out of his grasp. He was by now giving her presents—tubes of paints, the best brushes, a few yards of Belgian linen, which she accepted without comment; she also borrowed small sums from him, nothing unusual—a hundred lire today, five hundred tomorrow. And she announced one morning that he would thereafter, since he used so much of both, have to pay additional for water and electricity—he already paid extra for the heatless heat. Fidelman, though continually worried about money, assented. He would have given his last lira to lie on that soft belly, but she offered niente, not so much as a caress; until, one day, he was permitted to look on as she sketched herself nude in his presence. Since it was very cold the pittrice did this in two stages. First she removed her sweater and brassiere, and viewing herself in a long, faded mirror, quickly sketched the upper half of her body before it turned blue. He was dizzily enamored of her form and flesh tones. Hastily fastening the bra and pulling on her sweater, Annamaria stepped out of her sandals and peeled off her culottes, and white panties torn at the crotch, then drew the rest of herself down to her toes. The art student begged permission to sketch along with her but the pittrice denied it, so he had, as best one can, to commit to memory her lovely treasures —the hard, piercing breasts, narrow, shapely buttocks, vinehidden labia, the font and sweet beginning of time. After she had drawn herself and dressed, and when Augusto appeared and they had retired behind her bolted door, Fidelman sat motionless on his high stool before the glittering blue-skied windows, slowly turning to ice to faint strains of Bach.

3.

The art student increased his services to Annamaria; her increase was scorn, or so it seemed. This severely bruised his spirit. What have I done to deserve such treatment? That I pay my plenty of rent on time? That I buy her numerous presents, not to mention two full meals a day? That I live in flaming hot and freezing cold?

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That I passionately adore each sweet-and-sour bit of her? He figured it bored her to see so much of him. For a week Fidelman disappeared during the day, sat in cold libraries or visited frosty museums. He tried painting after midnight and into the early morning hours but the pittrice found out and unscrewed the bulbs before she went to bed. "Don't waste my electricity, this isn't America." He screwed in a dim blue bulb and worked silently from one a.m. to five. At dawn he discovered he had painted a blue picture. Fidelman wandered in the streets of the city. At night he slept in the studio and could hear her sleeping in her room. She slept restlessly, dreamed badly, and often moaned. He dreamed he had three eyes.

For two weeks he spoke to no one but a dumpy four-and-a-half-foot female on the third floor, and to her usually to say no. Fidelman, having often heard the music of Bach drifting up from below, had tried to picture the lady piano player, imagining a quiet blonde with a slender body, a woman of grace and beauty. It had turned out to be Clelia Montemaggio, a middle-aged old-maid music teacher, who sat at an old upright piano, her apartment door open to let out the cooking smells, particularly fried fish on Friday. Once when coming up from bringing down the garbage, Fidelman had paused to listen to part of a partita at her door and she had lassoed him in for an espresso and pastry. He ate and listened to Bach, her plump bottom moving spryly on the bench as she played not badly. "Lo spirito," she called to him raptly over her shoulder, "l'architettura!" Fidelman nodded. Thereafter whenever she spied him in the hall she attempted to entice him with cream-filled pastries and J.S.B., whom she played apparently exclusively.

"Come een," she called in English, "I weel play for you. We weel talk. There is no use for too much solitude." But the art student, burdened by his, spurned hers.

Unable to work, in a desolate mood he wandered in the streets, his spirit dusty in a city of fountains and leaking water taps. Water, water everywhere, spouting, flowing, dripping, whispering secrets, love love love, but not for him. If Rome's so sexy, where's mine? Fidelman's Romeless Rome. It belonged least to those who yearned most for it. With slow steps he climbed the Pincio, if possible to raise his spirits gazing down at the rooftops of the city, spires, cupolas, towers, monuments, compounded history and past time. It was in

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sight, possessible, all but its elusive spirit; after so long he was still straniero. He was then struck by a thought: if you could paint this sight, give it its quality in yours, the spirit belonged to you. History become esthetic! Fidelman's scalp thickened. A wild rush of things he might paint swept sweetly through him: saints in good and bad health, whole or maimed, in gold and red; nude gray rabbis at Auschwitz, black or white Negroes—what not when any color dripped from your brush? And if these, so also ANNAMARIA ES PULCHRA. He all but cheered. What more intimate possession of a woman! He would paint her, whether she permitted or not, posed or not—she was his to paint, he could with eyes shut. Maybe something will come after all of my love for her. His spirits elevated, Fidelman ran most of the way home.

It took him eight days, a labor of love. He tried her as nude and although able to imagine every inch of her, could not commit it to canvas. Then he suffered until it occurred to him to paint her as "Virgin with Child." The idea astonished and elated him. Fidelman went feverishly to work and caught an immediate likeness in paint. Annamaria, saintly beautiful, held in her arms the infant resembling his little nephew Georgie. The pittrice, aware, of course, of his continuous activity, cast curious glances his way, but Fidelman, painting in the corner by the stone sink, kept the easel turned away from her. She pretended unconcern. Done for the day he covered the painting and carefully guarded it. The art student was painting Annamaria in a passion of tenderness for the infant at her breast, her face responsive to its innocence. When, on the ninth day, in trepidation Fidelman revealed his work, the pittrice's eyes clouded and her underlip curled. He was about to grab the canvas and smash it up all over the place when her expression fell apart. The art student postponed all movement but visible trembling. She seemed at first appalled, a darkness descended on her, she was undone. She wailed wordlessly, then sobbed, "You have seen my soul." They embraced tempestuously, her breasts stabbing him, Annamaria bawling on his shoulder. Fidelman kissed her wet face and salted lips, she murmuring as he fooled with the hook of her brassiere under her sweater, "Aspetta, aspetta, caro, Augusto viene." He was mad with expectation and suspense.

Augusto, who usually arrived punctually at four, did not appear

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that Friday afternoon. Uneasy as the hour approached, Annamaria seemed relieved as the streets grew dark. She had worked badly after viewing Fidelman's painting, sighed frequently, gazed at him with sweet-sad smiles. At six she gave in to his urging and they retired to her room, his unframed "Virgin with Child" already hanging above her bed, replacing a gaunt self-portrait. He was curiously disappointed in the picture—surfacy thin—and made a mental note to borrow it back in the morning to work on it more. But the conception, at least, deserved the reward. Annamaria cooked supper. She cut his meat for him and fed him forkfuls. She peeled Fidelman's orange and stirred sugar in his coffee. Afterwards, at his nod, she locked and bolted the studio and bedroom doors and they undressed and slipped under her blankets. How good to be for a change on this side of the locked door, Fidelman thought, relaxing marvelously. Annamaria, however, seemed tensely alert to the noises of the old building, including a parrot screeching, some shouting kids running up the stairs, a soprano singing "Ritorna, vincitor!" But she calmed down and then hotly embraced Fidelman. In the middle of a passionate kiss the doorbell rang.

Annamaria stiffened in his arms. "Diavolo! Augusto!"

"He'll go away," Fidelman advised. "Both doors locked."

But she was at once out of bed, drawing on her culottes. "Get dressed," she said.

He hopped up and hastily got into his pants.

Annamaria unlocked and unbolted the inner door and then the outer one. It was the postman waiting to collect ten lire for an overweight letter from Naples.

After she had read the long letter and wiped away a tear they undressed and got back into bed.

"Who is he to you?" Fidelman asked.

"Who?"

"Augusto."

"An old friend. Like a father. We went through much together."

"Were you lovers?"

"Look, if you want me, take me. If you want to ask questions, go to school."

He determined to mind his business.

"Warm me," she said, "I'm freezing."

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Fidelman stroked her slowly. After ten minutes she said, " 'Gioco di mano, gioco di villano.' Use your imagination."

He used his imagination and she responded with excitement. "Dolce tesoro," she whispered, flicking the tip of her tongue into his ear, then with little bites biting his earlobe.

The door bell rang loudly.

"For Christ's sake, don't answer," Fidelman groaned. He tried to hold her down but she was already up, hunting her robe.

"Put on your pants," she hissed.

He had thoughts of waiting for her in bed but it ended with his dressing fully. She sent him to the door. It was the crippled portinaia, the art student having neglected to take down the garbage.

Annamaria furiously got the two bags and handed them to her.

In bed she was so cold her teeth chattered.

Tense with desire Fidelman warmed her.

"Angelo mio," she murmured. "Amore, possess me."

He was about to when she rose in a hurry. "The cursed door again!"

Fidelman gnashed his teeth. "I heard nothing."

In her torn yellow silk robe she hurried to the front door, opened and shut it, quickly locked and bolted it, did the same in her room and slid into bed.

"You were right, it was nobody."

She embraced him, her hairy armpits perfumed. He responded with postponed passion.

"Enough of antipasto," Annamaria said. She reached for his member.

Overwrought, Fidelman though fighting himself not to, spent himself in her hand. Although he mightily willed resurrection, his wilted flower bit the dust.

She furiously shoved him out of bed, into the studio, flinging his clothes after him.

"Pig, beast, onanist!"

4.

At least she lets me love her. Daily Fidelman shopped, cooked, and cleaned for her. Every morning he took her shopping sack off the hook, went to the street market and returned with the bag stuffed

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full of greens, pasta, eggs, meat, cheese, wine, bread. Annamaria insisted on three hearty meals a day although she had once told him she no longer enjoyed eating. Twice he had seen her throw up her supper. What she enjoyed he didn't know except it wasn't Fidelman. After he had served her at her table he was allowed to eat alone in the studio. At two every afternoon she took her siesta, and though it was forbidden to make noise, he was allowed to wash the dishes, dust and clean her room, swab the toilet bowl. She called "Fatso," and in he trotted to get her anything she had run out of—drawing pencils, sanitary belt, safety pins. After she waked from her nap, rain or shine, snow or hail, he was now compelled to leave the studio so she could work in peace and quiet. He wandered, in the tramontana, from one cold two-bit movie to another. At seven he was back to prepare her supper, and twice a week Augusto's, who sported a new black Borsalino and spiffy gray overcoat, and pitied the art student with both wet blue eyes but wouldn't look at him. After supper, another load of dishes, the garbage downstairs, and when Fidelman returned, with or without Augusto Annamaria was already closeted behind her bolted door. He checked through the keyhole on Mondays and Fridays but she and the old gent were always fully clothed. Fidelman had more than once complained to her that his punishment exceeded his crime, but the pittrice said he was a type she would never have any use for. In fact he did not exist for her. Not existing how could he paint, although he told himself he must? He couldn't. He aimlessly froze wherever he went, a mean cold that seared his lungs, although under his overcoat he wore a new thick sweater Bessie had knitted for him, and two woolen scarves around his neck. Since the night Annamaria had kicked him out of bed he had not been warm; yet he often dreamed of ultimate victory. Once when he was on his lonely way out of the house—a night she was giving a party for some painter friends, Fidelman, a drooping butt in the corner of his mouth, carrying the garbage bags, met Clelia Montemaggio coming up the stairs.

"You look like a frozen board," she said. "Come in and enjoy the warmth and a little Bach."

Unable to unfreeze enough to say no, he continued down with the garbage.

"Every man gets the woman he deserves," she called after him.

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"Who got," Fidelman muttered. "Who gets."

He considered jumping into the Tiber but it was full of ice that winter.

One night at the end of February, Annamaria, to Fidelman's astonishment—it deeply affected him—said he might go with her to a party at Giancarlo Balducci's studio on the Via dell'Oca; she needed somebody to accompany her in the bus across the bridge and Augusto was flat on his back with the Asian flu. The party was lively—painters, sculptors, some writers, two diplomats, a prince and a visiting Hindu sociologist, their ladies and three hotsy-totsy, scantily-dressed, unattached girls. One of them, a shapely beauty with orange hair, bright eyes, and warm ways became interested in Fidelman, except that he was dazed by Annamaria, seeing her in a dress for the first time, a ravishing, rich, ruby-colored affair. The crosseyed host had provided simply a huge cut-glass bowl of spiced mulled wine, and the guests dipped ceramic glasses into it and guzzled away. Everyone but the art student seemed to be enjoying himself. One or two of the men disappeared into other rooms with female friends or acquaintances, and Annamaria, in a gay mood, did a fast shimmy to rhythmic handclapping. She was drinking steadily and when she wanted her glass filled, politely called him "Arturo." He began to have mild thoughts of possibly possessing her.

The party grew, at least forty, and grew wildish. Practical jokes were played. Fidelman realized his left shoe had been painted with mustard. Balducci's black cat mewed at a fat woman's behind, a slice of sausage pinned to her dress. Before midnight there were two fist fights, Fidelman enjoying them but not getting involved, though once he was socked on the neck by a sculptor who had aimed at a painter. The girl with the orange hair, still interested in the art student, invited him to join her in Balducci's bedroom, but he continued to be devoted to Annamaria, his eyes tied to her every move. He was jealous of the illustrator, who whenever near her, nipped her bottom.

One of the sculptors, Orazio Pinello, a slender man with a darkish face, heavy black brows, and bleached blond hair, approached Fidelman. "Haven't we met before, caro?"

"Maybe," the art student said, perspiring lightly. "I'm Arthur Fidelman, an American painter."

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"You don't say? Action painter?"

"Always active."

"I refer of course to abstract expressionism."

"Of course. Sort of. On and off."

"Haven't I seen some of your work around? Not bad as I remember."

Fidelman thanked him, in full blush.

"Who are you here with?" Orazio Pinello asked.

"Annamaria Oliovino."

"Her?" said the sculptor. "But she's a fake."

"Is she?" Fidelman said with a sigh.

"Have you looked at her work?"

"With one eye. Her art is bad but I find her irresistible."

"Peccato." The sculptor shrugged and drifted away.

A minute later there was another fist fight, during which the bright-eyed orange head conked Fidelman with a Chinese vase. He went out cold and when he came to, Annamaria and Balducci were undressing him in the illustrator's bedroom. Fidelman experienced an almost overwhelming pleasure, then Balducci explained that the art student had been chosen to pose in the nude for drawings both he and the pittrice would do of him. He explained there had been a discussion as to which of them did male nudes best and they had decided to settle it in a short contest. Two easels had been wheeled to the center of the studio; a half hour was allotted to the contestants, and the guests would judge who had done the better job. Though he at first objected because it was a cold night, Fidelman nevertheless felt warmish from wine so he agreed to pose; besides he was proud of his muscles and maybe if she sketched him nude it might arouse her interest for a tussle later. And if he wasn't painting he was at least being painted.

So the pittrice and Giancarlo Balducci, in paint-smeared smocks, worked for thirty minutes by the clock, the whole party silently looking on, with the exception of the orange-haired tart, who sat in the corner eating a prosciutto sandwich. Annamaria, her brow furrowed, lips pursed, drew intensely with crayon; Balducci worked calmly in colored chalk. The guests were absorbed, although after ten minutes the Hindu went home. A journalist locked himself in the painter's bedroom with orange head and would not admit his wife who

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pounded on the door. Fidelman, standing barefoot on a bathmat, was eager to see what Annamaria was accomplishing but had to be patient. When the half hour was up he was permitted to look. Balducci had drawn a flock of green and black abstract testiculate circles. Fidelman shuddered. But Annamaria's drawing was representational, not Fidelman although of course inspired by him: a gigantic funereal phallus that resembled a broken-backed snake. The blond sculptor inspected it with half-closed eyes, then yawned and left. By now the party was over, the guests departed, lights out except for a few dripping white candles. Balducci was collecting his ceramic glasses and emptying ashtrays, and Annamaria had thrown up. The art student afterwards heard her begging the illustrator to sleep with her but Balducci complained of fatigue.

"I will if he won't," Fidelman offered.

Annamaria, enraged, spat on her picture of his unhappy phallus.

"Don't ever dare come near me," she cried. "Malocchio! Jettatura!"

5.

The next morning he awoke sneezing, a nasty cold. How can I go on? Annamaria, showing no signs of pity or remorse, continued shrilly to berate him.

"You've brought me nothing but bad luck since you came here. I'm letting you stay because you pay well but I warn you to keep out of my sight."

"But how—" he asked hoarsely.

"That doesn't concern me."

"—How will I paint?"

"Who cares? Paint at night."

"If there's no light—"

"Paint in the dark. With black paint."

"How can you be so cruel to someone who loves—"

"I'll scream," she said.

He left in anguish. Later while she was at her siesta he came back, got some of his things and tried to paint in the hall. No dice. Fidelman wandered in the rain. He sat for hours on the Spanish Steps. Then he returned to the house and went slowly up the stairs. The door was locked. "Annamaria," he hoarsely called. Nobody

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answered. In the street he stood at the river wall, watching the dome of St. Peter's in the distance. Maybe a potion, Fidelman thought, or an amulet? He doubted either would work. How do you hang yourself? In the late afternoon he went back to the house—would say he was sick, needed rest, possibly a doctor. He felt feverish. She could hardly refuse.

But she did, although explaining she felt bad herself. He held onto the bannister as he went down the stairs. Clelia Montemaggio's door was open. Fidelman paused, then continued down but she had seen him. "Come een, come een."

He went reluctantly in. She fed him camomile tea and panettone. He ate in a wolfish hurry as she seated herself at the piano.

"No Bach, please, my head aches from various troubles."

"Where's your dignity?" she asked.

"Try Chopin, that's lighter."

"Respect yourself, please."

Fidelman removed his hat as she began to play a Bach prelude, her bottom rhythmic on the bench. Though his cold oppressed him and he could hardly breathe, tonight the spirit, the architecture, moved him. He felt his face to see if he were crying but only his nose was wet. On the top of the piano Clelia had placed a bowl of white carnations in full bloom. Each white petal seemed a white flower. If I could paint those gorgeous flowers, Fidelman thought. If I could paint something. By Jesus, if I could paint myself, that'd show them! Astonished by the thought he ran out of the house.

The art student hastened to a costume shop and settled on a cassock and fuzzy black soupbowl biretta, envisaging another Rembrandt: "Portrait of the Artist as Priest." He hurried with his bulky package back to the house. Annamaria was handing the garbage to the portinaia as Fidelman thrust his way into the studio. He quickly changed into the priest's vestments. The pittrice came in wildly to tell him where he got off, but when she saw Fidelman already painting himself as priest, with a moan she rushed into her room. He worked with smoking intensity and in no time created an amazing likeness. Annamaria, after stealthily re-entering the studio, with heaving bosom and agitated eyes closely followed his progress. At last, with a cry she threw herself at his feet.

"Forgive me, father, for I have sinned—"

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Dripping brush in hand, he stared down at her. "Please, I—"

"Father, if you knew the extent of my sins. I have been a whore—"

After a minute's thought Fidelman said, " If so I absolve you." He ate in a wolfish hurry, as she seated herself at the piano.

"You can't without penance. But listen to the rest. I've had no luck with men. They're all bastards. Or maybe I jinx them. If you want the truth, I myself am an Evil Eye. Everyone who loves me is cursed." She moaned as though dreaming.

He listened, fascinated.

"Augusto is my uncle. After many others he became my lover. At least he's gentle. My father swore he'd kill us both. When I got pregnant I was scared to death. A sin can go too far. Augusto said to have the baby and give it to an orphanage but the night it was born I was confused and threw it into the Tiber."

She was sobbing. He drew back.

"The next time we were together Augusto was impotent. Since then he's been imploring me to confess so that he can recover his powers. But when I step into the confessional my tongue turns to bone. Try what he will, the priest can't tear a word out of me. Don't ask my why, I've been that way all my life." She grabbed his knees. "Help me, father, for Christ's sake, help me."

Fidelman, after a short tormented time, said in a quavering voice, "I forgive you, my child."

"The penance," she wailed, "first the penance."

"Say one hundred times each, Our Father and Hail Mary."

"Not enough," Annamaria wept. "More, more, I beg you." Gripping his knees so hard they shook she burrowed her head into his black-buttoned lap. He felt the surprised beginning of an erection.

"In that case," Fidelman said, shuddering a little, "better undress."

"Only," Annamaria said, "if you keep your vestments on."

"Not the cassock, too clumsy."

"At least the biretta."

He agreed to that.

Annamaria undressed in a swoop. Her body was extraordinarily lovely, the flesh tones glowing. In bed they tightly embraced. She clasped his buttocks, he cupped hers. Pumping slowly he nailed her to her cross.

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Evgeny Evtushenko

BABY YAR

There are no memorials at Baby Yar—
The steep slope is the only gravestone.
I am afraid.
Today I am as old as the Jewish people.
It seems to me now that I am a Jew.
And now, crucified on the cross, I die
And even now I bear the marks of the nails.
It seems to me that I am Dreyfus.
The worthy citizenry denounces me and judges me.
I am behind prison bars.
I am trapped, hunted, spat upon, reviled
And good ladies in dresses flounced with Brussels lace
Shrieking, poke umbrellas in my face.
It seems to me that I am a boy in Byelostok,
Blood flows and spreads across the floor.
Reeking of onion and vodka.
The leading lights of the saloon
Are on the rampage.

The Nazis' wartime massacre of Jews in the USSR is scarcely more popular a subject in the Soviet press than present-day antisemitism which is not acknowledged at all. The publication of *Baby Yar* (after the ravine near Kiev where 96,000 Jews were shot by the Nazis in 1941) has opened the first polemic on these inflammatory questions. The 28 year-old Evtushenko, the most popular of the younger Soviet poets, was denounced for over-concern with Jews, for singling out Jews as particular victims of Nazi genocide policy, and for slandering the Soviet people. These attacks appear to have made a hero of Evtushenko among young Soviet intellectuals who wildly and pointedly cheered him when he appeared at a mass gathering of young people in Moscow. The commotion provoked by *Baby Yar* caused Evtushenko to comment, in a poem published in December, that "posterity will burn with shame" when it recalls "these strange times when common honesty was called courage."—Patricia Blake

(This poem, together with other new material, will be included along with the contents of *Dissonant Voices in Soviet Literature* (PR 3-4, 1961), in a volume to be published this spring by Pantheon Books, edited by Patricia Blake and Max Hayward.)

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Booted aside, I am helpless:
I plead with the pogrom thugs
To roars of "Beat the Yids, and save Russia,"
A shopkeeper is beating up my mother.
O my Russian people!
You are really international at heart.
But the unclean
Have often loudly taken in vain
Your most pure name.
I know how good is my native land
And how vile it is that, without a quiver
The antisemites styled themselves with pomp
"The union of the Russian people."
It seems to me that I am Anne Frank,
As frail as a twig in April.
And I am full of love
And I have no need of empty phrases.
I want us to look at each other,
How little we can see or smell,
Neither the leaves on the trees nor the sky.
But we can do a lot.
We can tenderly embrace in a dark room.
Someone is coming? Don't be afraid—
It is the noise of spring itself.
Come to me, give me your lips.
Someone is forcing the door.
No, it is the breaking up of the ice . . .
Wild grasses rustle over Baby Yar.
The trees look down sternly, like judges.
Everything here shrieks silently
And, taking off my cap
I sense that I am turning grey.
And I myself am nothing but a silent shriek,
Over the thousands and thousands buried in this place.
I am every old man who was shot here.
I am every boy who was shot here.
No part of me will ever forget any of this.
Let the "Internationale" ring out

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When the last antisemite on earth is buried.
There is no Jewish blood in mine,
But I am hated by every antisemite as a Jew,
And for this reason,
I am a true Russian.

(*translated by Max Hayward*)

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ART CHRONICLE

A SURFEIT OF THE NEW

One takes for granted that any detailed review of a New York art season is unmanageable. Even after adopting the double limitations that arise almost automatically—in time only a section of a season just begun, and in space only a concentration upon a relatively small number of the city's three hundred fifty galleries—there remains an immense and by now immensely dispersed activity with some claim to attention.* Since the middle of September, I have counted some forty one-man exhibitions, about a third of them of sculpture, that could be said to "deserve" comment of some sort, and there surely have been others which a routine of rounds has overlooked.

Such unremitting production, all offered for examination in much the same fashion, minimizes the impact of any given exhibition. Unjust as the effects of saturation may be to the individual artist, there is no escaping them. Since the early days of the French and English Salons, artists have employed a variety of devices to arrest public attention; in the old days chiefly size and topical subject-matter, more recently also striking changes of manner and materials. Nowadays the critic of a certain age must guard against matched weaknesses. He must not rest in the comfort of styles so familiar that he occasionally indulges in the illusion that he has himself helped to create them (he should beware of the indulgent politeness of his artist friends), and he must avoid losing himself in the excitement of the new merely because history has warned him that the future, which is to say the true present, always belongs to revolt.

Nevertheless, I do not think it is any cautions of this kind that

* A partial list of these would include: Bourdelle, Gonzalez, Matisse, Arp, Chagall, Albers, Beauchamp, Carone, Cicero, Conner, Daphnis, Heiliger, Frankenthaler, Hiquily, Jenkins, Kelly, Lekakis, Lindeberg, Lipchitz, Louis, Marca-Relli, Pavia, Rauschenberg, Vieira de Silva, David Smith, Soulages, Stahly, Sugerman, Takis.

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leave me doubtful of the importance of the sum to date of this season's gallery shows. For one thing, such reserve is anything but popular these days, when "avant garde" commentary is pervaded by a generally euphoric approval of the recent achievements of American painting and sculpture, and the self-satisfied sentiment that the United States is doing better than anyone else. (Newspaper criticism, especially in our most respected journals, is something else again.) I share this general attitude, am indeed so easy about it, that I am constantly amazed by the nervous chauvinism of critics (otherwise right-thinking internationalists) who either ignore or run down all contemporary foreign work.

Besides, it is not the lack of excellent performance that has made me wonder about the importance of the sum-total of the gallery exhibitions. There were a number of genuinely attractive and successful shows both by established names and those somewhat less known. Cumulatively, however, they did little to alter the general aspect of the styles and tendencies now in the ascendant, nor did they produce any startling new talents. For all these reasons, the over-all picture was best summarized in the two large exhibitions, one at the Guggenheim Museum, *Abstract Expressionists and Imagists,* the other the *Assemblage* show at the Museum of Modern Art.

It is not surprising that this should be so, since more and more the American museum has turned its attention to the immediately contemporary scene. For many years this seemed fine; the museum, no longer a mere repository of the past, demonstrated that artists are alive and art continues into today and even tomorrow. In its present form it is not necessarily altogether a good thing, since it seems at an accelerated pace to be directing the collector as well as the public (for whom this may always have been true), away from the gallery and toward the museum as the place to make discoveries. The museum search for new talent is estimable in itself, but as it is stepped up by competition it increasingly removes the testing ground of the gallery, and those several years of gallery exhibitions during which a man's work may be examined freely, and without any semi-official stamp of approval, or disapproval—years which are as valuable to the artist as to his public. I am not advocating that painters and sculptors, even young ones, should live in attics any longer than is necessary, but if early museum purchase, and even more sudden one-man shows become widespread and standard, they will inevitably lose the special distinction they are designed to confer, while they will have eliminated a valuable period of examination and self-examination from the artist's life. Before the

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success story of the last decade, one used to worry why so few American artists continued into really expansive and fruitful old age; it is a danger that has by no means disappeared. Quick, and only too often ephemeral, recognition by public institutions before the artist has developed a committed, freely choosing audience is not going to help matters. It is no novelty to point out that over the last century early official blessing (Prix de Rome or any other) has more often proved a curse; we should question our own version of these rewards however unofficial an air we may lend them through our American structure of "private" institutions.

On balance, the Guggenheim exhibition was a fair review of one side of the current scene. (Particular omissions or inclusions can always be argued.) If it was somewhat overly handsome, this is a fairly accurate reflection of how things are with the work it was showing. Apart from the desire or the actuality of size, the sameness was not due to any lack of variety in compositional devices or color schemes; the several abstract traditions—from drip and overlay to Bauhaus and hard-edge painting—were all there, handled in personal, or less personal fashion. If there was any common formal tendency, it was towards a greater openness, a reduction in the relative size of strongly colored areas, and the use of floating, indeterminate space around outer portions of the canvas. The blandness was due rather to some lack of urgency. Here was a group whose detractors had accused it of not knowing what they were about, who had, themselves, and through some of their admirers, made much of the value of a lack of conscious control of the work's progress, now very clearly masters of a way of painting. There were some successful exceptions, largely the older artists who sustained a taughtness and paradox found at an earlier time; among most of the younger painters did not seem to translate itself into a rhythmic and valid structure of struggle, but rather into compact continuity without interval, from which tension was missing. But even the interesting misses were rare. High competence and talent was the order of the day, and the general impression was that these were artists who knew only too well what they were doing.

Are there reasons for finding these developments disturbing? Though the New York painters have maintained they have never been a school or constituted a style, their work was at least based upon a common acceptance of personal, highly charged emotion and its expression in as unrefracted and undiluted a fashion as possible. The force and immediacy of their work was bound up with this attitude, and with the double struggle to find a new and personal plastic language and to

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establish its place in the sun. Are these qualities to disappear now that both objectives have been won? (I am not talking of "success.") It would seem that, precisely to the extent their claim to not being a school proves justified, this need not happen. If the bases are preserved—those contradicting combinations of surrealist space and cubist surface, of intellectual abstraction and personal emotion, of extreme individualism and extreme generalization (rather than the manner of the masters), then we have a revolutionary fundamental style which, like cubism itself, will continue and evolve in ways that while unpredictable, will be elaborations that are recognizable.

This suggests in turn that a reaction, either revivalist or innovating, is not inevitable. But it suggests too that the historical and social interpretations of the content of the New York school, those patriotic confrontations of the essence of the school and the essence of the country, are not inevitable either. There is no doubt that this is the significant American style of the last fifteen years, but this style will evolve. In the form we have known, it is no more the permanent American style than was the realism that used to be declared fundamental to the American character. Each belonged to a time and a place—and to individuals. This gives these works their particular character; to make them carry any more ideological freight robs them of a portion of that character, and precisely that portion their creators most insisted upon.

The *Assemblage* exhibition brought forth some of the most violent journalistic attacks of recent times, both from avowed traditionalists and professed progressives. It was somewhat difficult to see why. The theme of the show was after all as old as Arthur Cravan climbing through the window of the Luxembourg museum to hang an empty picture frame: art is not defined by consecrated materials and techniques but by the poetic intention of the artist. Once this was granted—and one would have imagined it granted a long while ago—it was remarkable into what traditionally consecrated modern visual arrangements most of the work fell. The dadaists, of course, adopted cubist principals—at the time it was part of their shock value—but this holds true as well for the great majority of the recent neo-dadaists (Rauschenberg, for example), who, compositionally, are much more traditional than many of the painters whose works hung at the Guggenheim.

Even so, since the show was based on a method of creating images, rather than on the character of the images themselves, it brought together a great variety of styles and intentions, from the most classic to the most romantic. Historically, *papier collé* may have been the first introduction of unorthodox materials, but it is by this time so accepted

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a method, and carries with it so little associational value that it seemed incongruous in tone alongside the rest. The best evidence here was not only a group of the justly famous early collages of Picasso and Braque that were in the exhibition, but the beautiful cut-outs by Matisse that made up the museum's special exhibition of his last works. Here the purity of means is such that its particular collage character matters not at all, since it is, so to speak transparent, and entirely forgotten in the contemplation of the result, just as the oil paint medium is forgotten in a Rembrandt.

It may perhaps be objected that in Schwitters' *Merzbilder* the presence of cast-off materials, ignoble and unaesthetic in origin and association, does count. There is no question but that to Schwitters the preservation of this expendable rubbish in an unexpected and isolated setting where its visual properties could be studied and even, by juxtapositions, enhanced, and the consequent contradiction of its first purpose and its expected fate by the new destiny he had given it, was a prime source of initial inspiration and final irony. But, for anything but historical curiosity, has it retained that function today? I think it is not accidental that each time Schwitters' work is shown, the context of its creation must be so carefully recounted. Visually, these works are enormously attractive and successful; their Dada heroism is scarcely apparent.

The Schwitters' collages are a classic instance of transformation; his innovating role, and his temporary oblivion, made the change gradual. One suspects that other assemblages, constructed of momentarily even less acceptable materials, will be more quickly susceptible to the same process. It has taken only a few years for cast off machine and boiler parts to become so traditional that we examine them largely for their aesthetic qualities and the sculptor's employment of those qualities, and their initially sharp and effective discords are replaced by harmonies. Is not the same evolution already beginning with automobile fenders and bumpers (and not only in the work of the derivative artists); how long will it take for the silk stockings to revert to the sole pastel colors of their original intention? It is difficult to know how much this disassociation evolves within the artist's own vision, as with increasing familiarity and handling in studio surroundings, the initial real-life connections fade away, and how much it develops in similar fashion within the spectator's way of seeing. The developments are probably parallel, and reinforce each other. (Nothing in the above is intended to be critical of the *quality* of the sculpture of Stankiewicz

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and Chamberlain, which I much admire; this is a problem that is out of their control.)

I am not suggesting that dada (or assemblage in so far as it partakes of the dada spirit) gradually loses its fire and reduces to pale decoration. It would be easy to say that it is no more subject to such historical attrition than any art for whose iconography we have lost immediate understanding. But it is probably much more quickly susceptible because of its initial insistence upon a clash between its iconographic materials and their meaningful arrangements. The shock once gone, what is left, if not a fused and unified, and consequently anti-dada, work of art? This character true dadas of course refuse to countenance; the best of their work nevertheless possesses it, and so disposes of the fond notion that this is anti-art. It is art which is against, but against the momentarily accepted (or supposedly accepted) canons of art, always within the context of art. Fortunately, the only way an artist can be against art is, like Rimbaud (but not like Duchamp), to cease being an artist.

Robert Goldwater

Fairfield Porter to Jan. 30
Timothy Hennessy Jan. 30-Feb. 17
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BOOKS

ANTI-CANT

ON THE CONTRARY: ARTICLES OF BELIEF, 1946-1961. By Mary Mc Carthy. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $4.50.

The stock response—"intelligent"—to Miss McCarthy needs to be refined, at any rate to the degree of "intelligent woman," before one gets close enough to the truth to start talking about her. Most men retain a vestige of awe for women who think with "masculine" force; and in England there is still, for historical reasons, a tendency for women intellectuals to go in for a sort of mental transvestism, to assume that such a male activity as thought requires its exponents to behave like men in other ways. In fact it seems to me an under-rated achievement of American culture to have eliminated this kind of behavior; where it persists it tends to falsify any dialogue between people of opposite sex. Miss McCarthy is terribly quick to spot falsity, and in matters of this sort attends to detail, including sex. Her piece about the anti-Semitic colonel in the club car shows this: and in a comment on it she emphasises truthfully the degree to which a faint undercurrent of sexual adventure, by contributing to the falseness of the debate, hampered her rational persuasions at the time, and would ruin the value of her account of the episode if not made sufficiently explicit. Her "Confession"—a beautifully written, ironically entitled version of her intellectual life in the Marxist 'thirties—is heavily sexed, not only in its account of the girl at the Party parties, but in its philosophical argument for *passivity,* for a view of the world in which you suffer things and problems rather than control or pose them; a career determined by an unwritten letter, the future of Russia by a decision to go duck-shooting. This is very un-male.

Having got that across, Miss McCarthy is free to do as she wishes with her specially toughened intellect, to exploit a sense of relevance and a directness of method seldom found in male intellectuals, who have a strong tendency to pose and to exude what Miss McCarthy calls "the slow drip of cant." Reading her "confession,' and remembering the dramatic and best-selling documents she is satirising, I found myself thinking, improbable as it may sound, of the young nun in Firbank's

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novel "who was inclined to give herself married airs, since she had been debauched, one otiose noon, by a demon." Assuming that this could happen to anybody, there remains a difference between those who give themselves airs about it, and those who do not. Miss McCarthy despises those who do; for herself, she would admit that the experience to some extent deepened her *singularity,* and ought to be regarded as relevant; she would give herself no airs, certainly not married ones. She is incorrigibly single, which is why she disagrees on principle with the world.

This is productive of paradox. Is anti-Semitism mindless? No, it is "a form of intellectuality," a substitute for the pleasures of logical exercise. I cannot myself believe this; it seems an example of an intellectual preference for extensible hypotheses over common observations. In fact Miss McCarthy, who is in many ways like Shaw, and in many others like Orwell, shares some of their impatience with common sense: it is a looking-glass silvered with stupidity, and when you get through it you see that things are actually the wrong way round on the usual side. The learned, vivid contrariness of the author's mind comes out strongly in the section called "Politics and the Social Scene," for instance, in her defence of American innocence. On the subject her position is close to that of Henry James, but more radical. She thinks, as Shakespeare did, that nothing new is to be found in America; his Indian is a European savage. Irritated by Simone de Beauvoir, Miss McCarthy asserts that American ugliness is merely European squalor writ large, given room to expand. This is an example of the genetic fallacy. French, English, Indian squalor might similarly be explained as the consequence of remote invasions. Nobody can drive far in the United States without learning the differentiae of American ugliness; it is largely a matter of licentious outdoor selling, and the general indifference to this is all the more remarkable to the European observer who has noticed that, from one end of the middle class to the other, American houses are more beautiful than their European counterparts.

However, this example surprises Miss McCarthy in a likeable posture of patriotic defense; in fact, she is extremely sensitive to the disorders of American life. What leads her into excess is a just fury with other people for being stupid or inaccurate. "These authors will say *anything,*" she cries, exasperated at the inadequate premises and feeble logic of a book on modern woman. Unflaggingly valiant for truth, she has come to see that this isolates her; few can argue with such fierce disinterest, few can dispense as she does with cant. Why do we all put up with it? Well—cant, in politics, is a discharge from the body politic consequent

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upon an infection of liberalism. The British Government, to take a current example, drips cant when it pretends that its bill against colonial immigration applies equally to white and black citizens. On the other hand, Dr. Verwoerd talks not cant but evil nonsense; we can be sure that Negroes will fare better on cant. Verwoerd betrays and smashes people; Mr. Butler only ideals. This exactly measures the desirability of political cant.

I should not expect Miss McCarthy to allow this line of argument. Particular instances of injustice she refers to the appropriate theory. "The difference between a democracy and a tyranny is that in theory the citizen of a democracy possesses inherent rights." To behave as if these rights were not inherent, but merely favors and subject to good behavior, like the right to own a gun, is therefore tyrannical. Licenses they mean when they cry liberty. The context is the persecution by Committee of, for instance, Arthur Miller; but Miss McCarthy is capable of treating the calumniating of Dickens by a modern reviewer as a symptom of a similar disease. She notes the paradox that ideas now enjoy an immunity from state interference denied the people who hold them; this is at least in part because the persecutors can assume that most people are entirely impervious to all ideas, whether dangerous or not. And this again sets Miss McCarthy apart, an ideal citizen of a Mill-inspired anarchy in which all ideas circulate freely, the good tending to survive and the bad to die, the community as a whole being equal to the demands upon its ethical maturity. "Is it really so difficult to tell a good action from a bad one?" asks Miss McCarthy. It would seem so, since most people appear to be wrong most of the time.

Here we observe a puritanical streak in the contrariness; Miss McCarthy's intolerance, especially of intolerance, is based upon an uncompromising attitude to untruth, as much in herself as in others. This simplicity underlies the subtlety of the very important critical essays which come at the end of the present collection. Miss McCarthy is mistress of a direct and vivid style; it seems to reflect the color of her mind, to be the natural rhetorical mode of her truth-telling, as, once more, were Shaw's and Orwell's. Her argument goes straight forward; she is absolutely free of the modern critical habit of stopping every few words to admire the terminology. And nowhere is it more impressive than in these critical essays.

There is at present a growing and I think healthy movement of thought in England which advocates a return from the novel of formal experiment, the twentieth-century ideal, to an older kind, the novel of "character." Iris Murdoch and John Bayley have argued with much

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force that the present need is to shrink back from the pole of "myth" towards the pole of "journalism;" to avoid short-circuiting reality and personality by too easy a recourse to myth and falsifying "form." Miss McCarthy, writing in the same year as these critics and others in England, says something similar in her own way.

Her concern, as ever, is with the truth. In one brilliantly entertaining piece, called "Settling the Colonel's Hash," she begins by exposing a creative writing instructor who went through a pupil's work to "put in the symbols," and goes on to explain that her own story about the club car colonel had attracted a variety of symbolical interpretations. But the story was *true;* Miss McCarthy's dress really was in two shades of green, the colonel did eat hash, and the green is green, the hash hash, not "Eucharistic mincemeat." To have made them mean such things would have been to destroy the truth of the account; in fact, paradoxically, a concern with such symbolism seems to have destroyed our power to handle the "natural symbols" which, in fiction as in life, lead towards and not away from reality. The trains in *Anna Karenina* are *natural* symbols; Miss McCarthy would not like to think of Tolstoy as putting them in artificially; it would be "a sort of fraud." She herself would use only that kind; "the tree of life is greener than the tree of thought," and in going in for "souped-up novels" we show that we have lost our sense of reality, of factuality.

So, her flag flying against the wind, Miss McCarthy, like her English counterparts, rejects what may be loosely called the sacramental view of things in favor of an acceptance of things as they are; a drab sentiment, said Wilde, and eighty years of symbolic writing echo him. This is a good contrariness; but once more it blurs useful distinctions. For instance, it should be possible to condemn the creative writing instructor without lumping him together with a serious artist like David Jones, for whom all things have truth and value in so far as they are *anathemata,* signs of absolute reality; he would say that Miss McCarthy was incapable of the act of *anamnesis* required to see things as they are, and that her "natural symbols" were stupefyingly tautological. If you put in a piece of wood, or the colonel's hash, you do so not because it was in some trivial sense true, but because it induces an *anamnesis* of the Cross, or, by opposition (see *1 Cor. x*) of the Eucharist. That both Miss McCarthy and tht colonel were lapsed Catholics would seem to him the important clue, explaining the determined attempt to warp the rest by being "natural." I am not, need I say, a Jones man, but he should not be confounded with that instructor. Nor am I arguing merely that honourable exceptions ought to be made. I think Miss

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McCarthy claims extravagant rights over her work; her puritan vigor impinges upon liberty of interpretation. It is a liberty which moral stupidity easily reduces to license, but it is basic to the health of literature. As usual with honest paradoxologists, she is on the right side of the question without being quite right.

The same contrariness is evident at any rate in the first of the two remarkable essays called "The Fact in Fiction" and "Characters in Fiction." I must say at once that in their force and persuasiveness, as well as in their intense relevance to the major problems of modern literature, they are classic performances. The first of them I happened to hear as a lecture in England; its impetus, the slowly rolling cannonball of its argument, survived a serious misadventure—the speaker, pausing for refreshment, took a mouthful of broken glass—and moved inexorably on. The argument, briefly, is that great novels do and all novels should have a large dosage of fact; the one thing the great novelists have in common is a love of "the empiric element in experience." I have abused the word "puritan," so I will say that this point is made with a Dominican thoroughness; and the impetus of the work carries the argument through to paradox, Miss McCarthy's habitual terminus. False representations of reality are damaging to a novel, even if the writer thinks he is telling the truth: "if Tolstoy was all wrong about the Battle of Borodino or the character of Napoleon, *War and Peace* would suffer." Thus Dickens really thought it possible for Krook to explode; as it wasn't, the misapprehension damages *Bleak House*. *Moby Dick* depends upon the accuracy of its chapters on whaling. As a matter of fact, I was once told by F. D. Ommaney, who knows all about whaling, that *Moby Dick is* inaccurate compared with *The Cruise of the Cachalot*. I believe him, but how can it be true that one has to know one way or the other before making up one's mind about the book? On Miss McCarthy's view, the merits of *Moby Dick* now hang upon an investigation of Ommaney's remark. There is fanaticism here, paradox erected into a system, as if by an angry Chesterton, or Shaw tilting against the doctors. "Real gardens with imaginary toads in them" is an imperfect account of the novel, however penetrating the observations on which it is based.

"Characters in Fiction" is less vulnerable, though just as challenging. In it, and in the recent work of Murdoch, Bayley and W. J. Harvey, one senses the beginnings of a new epoch in the criticism, if not in the composition, of novels. I seem to be saying for the first time without qualification that she is right. If so, this piece has been too contentious, and I must add that to disagree with Miss McCarthy at all is to be

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aware that one is incomparably less honest, as well as less clever, than she; and that I can think of no writer whose silence would be more damaging to our moral and intellectual hygiene.

Frank Kermode

UP FROM ADOLESCENCE

FRANNY AND ZOOEY. By J. D. Salinger. Little, Brown. $4.00.

I am not sure why I have liked so much less this time through a story which moved me so deeply when I first read it in *The New Yorker* four or five years ago. I mean, of course, "Zooey," to which "Franny" is finally an appendage, like the long explanatory footnote on pages 52 and 53, the author's apologetic statement on the jacket, the pretentiously modest dedication: all the gimmicks, in short, which conceal neither from him nor from us the fact that he has not yet made of essentially novelistic material the novel it wants to become.

It was, I guess, the novel which "Zooey," along with a handful of earlier stories, seemed to promise to which I responded with initial enthusiasm: the fat chronicle of the Glass family which might have caught once and for all the pathos and silliness of middle-class, middle-brow intellectual aspiration—the sad and foolish dream that certain families, largely Jewish, dreamed for their children listening to the Quiz Kids perform on the radio two long decades ago. For the sake of that novel, Salinger seemed at the point of making a new start, of breaking through certain bad habits picked up along the way from *Good Housekeeping* to *The New Yorker*. Certainly in "Zooey" Salinger had begun untypically to specify the times and circumstances of his characters; to furnish patiently the rooms through which they moved; to eschew slickness and sentimentality and easy jokes in favor of a style almost inept enough to guarantee honesty; to venture beyond an evocation of adolescent self-pity and adolescent concern with sex titillating chiefly to adolescents themselves.

But there is, as yet, no novel—only "Zooey," well-leaded and in hard-covers, flanked by apologies and new promises, but still unfulfilled: and it is this, I suppose, which has left me baffled and a little disappointed. In a magazine, Salinger's documentation seemed not quite so irrelevant, his furnishings not quite so disproportionate to the events they frame, the awkwardness of his writing not quite so much a tic of embarrassment or a posture of false modesty.

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"Franny" itself, which I had not read before, seems to me an eminently satisfactory piece of reportage, turned in as evidence (at the demonstration trial of the generations, in which it is not clear who is the plaintiff, who the defendant) by a middle-aged eavesdropper on station-platforms and at restaurants where the Ivy League young ritually prepare for watching games and getting laid. It is, at least, scarcely ever cute, like much of "Zooey" and all of the mere apparatus which with it ekes out a book; and it ends ambiguously before its author, whose resolutions are often disasters, can manage to be either sentimental or sage. In "Franny" for once Salinger demonstrates that he can write of adolescence without disappearing into it; but "Franny," alas, is completed by "Zooey," which itself completes nothing.

We have been, I begin slowly to understand, living through a revolution in taste, a radical transformation of the widest American literary audience from one in which women predominate to one in which adolescents make up the majority. Controlling the market (it is, for instance, largely to reach them that the more expensive paperbacks were invented and marketed in new ways by new generations of editors scarcely older than themselves), they control also the mode. And the mode demands, in lieu of the teen-age novelists who somehow refuse to appear, Teen-age Impersonators, among whom one might list, say, Norman Mailer, Jack Kerouac, even William Burroughs—certainly the Salinger who wrote *Catcher in the Rye* and invented Holden Caulfield, a figure emulated by the young themselves, though not by all the young.

Each of the Impersonators I have mentioned speaks only for a portion of our youth: hip or beat or square, straight or queer or undecided. No one writes for all, but inevitably takes his stand: with those who "turn on" or those who do not, with those who write papers on Kierkegaard and Flaubert or those who scrawl on the walls of saloons "Ez for Pres." Salinger, of course, speaks for the cleanest, politest, best-dressed, best-fed and best-read among the disaffected (and who is not disaffected?) young; not junkies or faggots, not even upper-bohemians, his protagonists travel a road bounded on one end by school and on the other by home. They have families and teachers rather than lovers or friends; and their crises are likely to be defined in terms of whether or not to go back for the second semester to Vassar or Princeton, to Dana Hall or St. Mark's. Their *angst* is improbably cued by such questions as: "Does my date for the Harvard Weekend *really* understand what poetry is?" or "Is it possible that my English instructor hates literature after all?"

I do not mean by reduction to mock the concerns of Salinger's

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characters; they cannot, in any case, be reduced, and I should mock myself making fun of them. For better or for worse, a significant number of sensitive young Americans live in a world in which the classroom and the football game provide customary arenas for anguish and joy, love and death; and to that world, Salinger has been more faithful than it perhaps deserves. Which is why in the end he is a comic novelist or nothing. If the Temple Drake of Faulkner's *Sanctuary* stands as the classic portrait of a co-ed in the 'twenties, the Franny of Salinger's Glass stories bids to become her equivalent for the 'fifties, and the decline in terror and intensity from one to the other, the descent toward middlebrow bathos is the fault not of Salinger but of the times. Temple's revolt was against vestigial Puritanism and obscelesent chivalry and her weapons were booze and sex; Franny's is against literature and the New Criticism and her weapon is the "Jesus Prayer."

Certainly, this is fair enough; for, in the thirty years that separate the two refugees from college, the Culture Religion of Western Europe has replaced Christianity as the orthodox faith for middle-class urban Americans; and the Pastors to whom our hungry sheep look up in vain are Ph.D.'s in Literature and the "section men" who are their acolytes. In a society presided over by this new clergy, to play with Vedanta or Buddhism or even Catholicism, except as these are represented in certain recent poetic texts, i.e., to seek a salvation beyond the reach of art, is considered heresy or madness or some blasphemous compound of both. Franny, at any rate, who will not write the proper papers or go out for the next college play, seems, not only to her elders and her peers, but to herself as well a heretic guilty as charged and therefore self-condemned to what her world calls a "nervous breakdown."

I am less sure this time though than I was the first that Salinger really understands just how splendid and horrifying a joke this all is, but begin to suspect that he has only stumbled on the comic possibilities of his subject in pursuit of a more pathetic theme which has obsessed him ever since the writing of his popular little tear-jerker, "To Esmé with Love and Squalor." It is this theme which lies at the center of *Catcher in the Rye* and which becomes the main interest if not of "Franny," certainly of the much longer "Zooey." I am referring, of course, to Salinger's presentation of madness as the chief temptation of modern life, especially for the intelligent young; and his conviction that, consequently, the chief heroism possible to us now is the rejection of madness, the decision to be sane. What suicide was for the young Werther or running away from home for Huck Finn, the "nervous breakdown," Salinger urges us to believe, is for the sensitive adolescent of our time.

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Having been taught, chiefly by the psychoanalysts (who haunt Salinger's books, ambiguous and omnipresent almost as his teachers), that insanity itself lies within the scope of choice, we have been able to make of it a theme for debate, our own to-be-or-not-to-be.

Before the present volume, Salinger had always presented madness as a special temptation of males; perhaps because, in the myth he was elaborating, it is a female image of innocence that, at the last moment, lures his almost-lost protagonists back from the brink of insanity: a little girl typically, pre-pubescent and therefore immune to the world's evil, which, in his work, fully nubile women tend to embody. The series which begins with "Esmé" goes on through "A Perfect Day for Banana-fish," where the girl-savior appears too late to save Seymour, oldest of the Glass family; and reaches an appropriate climax in *Catcher in the Rye,* where the savior is the little sister and the myth achieves its final form. It is the Orestes-Iphigenia story, we see there, that Salinger all along had been trying to rewrite, the account of a Fury-haunted brother redeemed by his priestess-sister; though Salinger demotes that sister in age, thus downgrading the tone of the legend from tragic to merely pathetic.

In "Zooey," where the brother saves, the sister is redeemed and neither is a child, the myth struggles back toward the tragic dimension; and it is for this, too, perhaps, that I responded so strongly at first to the story, to its implicit declaration of Salinger's resolve to escape what had become for him a trap. Yet though the girl-savior does not operate in "Zooey" to produce the pat Happy Ending of *Catcher in the Rye,* she floats disconcertingly in and out of its action, a not-quite-irrelevant ghost. It is, for instance, the chance meeting with a four year old girl at the meat counter of a Supermarket that prompts the long letter from his oldest surviving brother, Buddy, which Zooey is reading as his story opens; and in that letter, we are permitted to see at last the *haiku* found in Seymour's hotel room after his suicide: "The little girl on the plane/Who turned her doll's head around/To look at me."

Buddy, however, released from long silence by his little girl and the memory of Seymour's, has tried to save Zooey, through the mails, by advising him to "act" (Buddy is a teacher of writing, Zooey a T.V. star); and Zooey, trying in turn to save Franny, can only repeat in Buddy's voice and over Seymour's still-listed telephone the same advice. Behind it all, at any rate, is the inevitable little girl, her message echoed and re-echoed through the linked ventriloquist's dummies of the three brothers, who seem sometimes only three versions of the single author, listening faithfully to Esmé down the years.

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But "Zooey" is, at last, a fable of reconciliation as well as of salvation; for the saved Franny, we are left to believe, will return perhaps to school, certainly to "acting," as her brothers recommend, not so much for her own sake as for the sake of what Seymour had been accustomed to call, in their Quiz Kid days, the Fat Lady, i.e., the audience out front. But the Fat Lady, Zooey announces as his story ends, is Christ; the mass audience is Christ. It is an appropriate enough theophany for a popular entertainer, for Salinger as well as Zooey, and the cue for a truce with all the world, with bad teachers, mad television producers, bad psychoanalysts, bad everyone.

Finally, like his characters, Salinger is reconciled with everything but sex. The single voice in his novella which advocates marriage is the voice of Bessie Glass, a stage-Irish comic mother married to an off-stage comic Jew; but she raises it in vain in a fictional world where apparently only women marry and where certainly no father appears on the scene. It is to Zooey she speaks, the one son of hers not already killed by marriage like Seymour, or safe in monastic retirement, secular like Buddy's or ecclesiastical like his Jesuit brother Waker's. Zooey, who fears his own body and his mother's touch on it, turns her aside with a quip; though he might well have repeated what he had cried earlier in deep contempt, "That's just sex talking, buddy . . . I know that voice." These words, too, he had addressed to her; since for him men and women alike are "buddy," as if unlike the actual Buddy, he needed no little girl to remind him of what Seymour had once tried to teach them all: that "all legitimate religious study *must* lead to unlearning . . . the illusory differences between boys and girls . . ."

To unlearn the illusory differences: this is what for Salinger it means *to be as a child*. And the Glasses, we remember, are in this sense children, holy innocents still at twenty or thirty or forty, Quiz Kids who never made the mistake of growing up, and whose most glorious hours were spent before the microphones on a nation-wide radio program called "It's a Wise Child." The notion of the Quiz Kids, with their forced precocity, their meaningless answers to pointless questions faked by station employes as heroes, sages, secret saints of our time is palpably absurd. But Salinger himself ironically qualifies what he seems naively to offer by the unfinished quotation he uses to give his only half-mythical program its name. It is with his collaboration, we remind ourselves, that we are able to say of his hidden saints, when they become insufferably cute or clever or smug, "The little bastards!" Surely, this is Salinger's joke, not just one on him and on his world.

Leslie A. Fiedler

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RIESMAN CONSIDERED AGAIN

CULTURE AND SOCIAL CHARACTER. The work of David Riesman reviewed, appraised and criticized by his contemporaries in Social Sciences. Edited by Seymour Lipset and Leo Lowenthal. The Free Press. $7.50.

Our prosperous, unique, odd society was wild we felt, but splendid, too, like a run-away horse. Right after the war, the therapy for all our moral discomforts was a daily recitation of the sins of Communism and the Soviet Union and the subsequent healthy enjoyment of our own virtues, or at least of our absent sins. Nothing much was asked of us beyond that, no other sacrifice beyond reminding ourselves how good we were as a people and a system and how little we needed to suffer the infection of despairing self-criticism. These easy days did not last long. How quickly we showed an unexpected vulnerability, from within first—the "quality of our prosperity"—and from without in the vexing technological success of the Soviet Union. Our hopes seemed to fall away. It was as if we had bought one of those brilliant gardenia plants too soon before Easter and had watched the rudely forced green buds, with the white petals tightly curled inside, fall off one by one, without coming to bloom.

Sometimes one has the feeling of an almost supernatural character to the shifts and changes in our national mood. They appear beyond the prose of cause and effect and to live through them is to know the ineffable pain and fascination of tragedy. It was such a short, short time. We were all ready, as a people, to go in for a monumental, historic relaxation of soul and even of muscle, a relaxtion of effort that was truly new and whose ultimate meaning one could not even guess at. Then, suddenly, in the blinking of an eye, we were asked to calculate how many millions we could lose and still "survive."

Our happier days had been described, with great cleverness and zest, and in the properly complicated, ambiguous manner by David Riesman, particularly in *The Lonely Crowd*. He had, or so it seemed, made the sort of adjustment that allowed him to accept much that others shrank from assimilating. Riesman saw everything dangerous, but he did not take the defects of our society with too great a seriousness. He was, rather, often amused by them and the reader of his books was somehow invited to get with it, too.

I remember a windy night last spring and the small group of people gathered in midtown Manhattan for a meeting of the Committee for Cultural Freedom. (I hope it is not unfair to remember this occasion and the mood of it. The opinions expressed were not—or so I believe—secret

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ones; in fact, the declarations were urgent and passionate.) Diana Trilling, with great energy of mind and at considerable length, urged upon the group the demonic theory of Communism and the Soviet Union and further seemed to insist that the debate about our national destiny, insofar as Russia was concerned, should remain static, a contest between good and evil. If I understood it correctly, the drift of the opinion was much the same as that expressed previously in Mrs. Trilling's occasional political pieces. She seems to have found, back in time, the meaning of the struggle and to consider it settled, as if it were some issue of past history and all the research had been done. Nuclear war played no special part in her vivid picture. What she feared was the inner weakening of the intellectual's will to resist, a weakening due in part to the cold war, the need for negotiation, the necessity—at least as some saw it—for co-existence.

I bring this matter up because David Riesman played a role; he was a sort of absent ghost, floating in and out of the argument, and threatening Mrs. Trilling's religious view of the political subject. Many other minds might threaten her vision, but it was most dramatic to find Riesman prominently and urgently doing so in his current writings. It was unexpected because he had in the past been impatient with radical criticism and fear, and even scornful at times of intransigence or utopian vision. But now—*ah, perfido!* In an article in *Commentary* last year, Riesman (with Michael Maccoby) had written that the political atmosphere in America was much less healthy than in England. In England one could undertake "an active discussion . . . of alternatives to nuclear war, with the proposals ranging from unilateral disarmament to diplomatic maneuvers aimed at easing particular points of tension in the cold war, whether in China or in Germany." Riesman found our ability to deal sensibly with the issue of Communism much inferior to the British. "Even after the Klaus Fuchs case, they [the British] in effect decided that they would rather risk losing a few secrets to a few spies than turn the country upside down in the alleged hope of flushing all enemy agents out."

As I remember Mrs. Trilling's paper, she was particularly disturbed by Riesman's psychological analysis, in the same *Commentary* article, of the issue of "hard and soft anti-communism." This phrase, or these phrases, are most unfortunate and of course contain almost infinite comic possibilities disconcerting to the normal discussion-group atmosphere. The possibilities were not lost on the author of *The Lonely Crowd,* even though he forbore to push them too far. He noted that "American men seem constantly pursued by the fear of unmanliness, and therefore

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feel the need to present themselves as hard and realistic." The chief point of Riesman's article and many of his recent political writings was that he wished to change the debate about the cold war, which he saw as not a simple contest between America and Russia but as "the failure of a way of life." He took a radically critical position on the problem of Germany and on nuclear testing; he seemed almost a pacifist.

All of this is surprising from the man who had so much disliked, as Norman Birnbaum says, "the pretensions of spiritual heroism," and who had reserved "an acerbity, uncommon for him, for those who do manifest a critical politics." Riesman had shown a suspiciously agile gift for accomodation to post-war America. One might ask oneself about the new pacificism, the desperate worry about nuclear war, the need to examine again the Soviet view on certain points—was all this just another quick shifting of the gears, another finger testing the wind? Perhaps the "hard anti-communists" would name it just that, but the answer would depend upon which direction you felt the wind coming from. It is hard to imagine popularity will follow such serious distaste for so many of our national attitudes.

The present activities of Riesman, his Pauline conversion, so to speak, bear a relation to his work as a sociologist; they change his possibilities even more than he seems to realize. This new book, *Culture and Social Character,* points up the curious nature of Riesman's career. First of all, his every essence seems to contain a high degree of restlessness, a vigilant need for self-examination and a natural tendency to revision. The mere idea of collecting essays about his work treats him as if he were a completed story, like, for instance, Max Weber. And, of course, it is not only that his professional career is far from finished, but that his past work is constantly being altered and revised and, because of the way he arrives at his opinions, being put out of order by history. Time, even a very short time, makes a great difference. For instance, there is a new preface to the new paperback edition of *The Lonely Crowd,* a new preface to the paperback edition of Riesman's *Veblen,* a "reconsideration" (written with his collaborator, Nathan Glazer) of *The Lonely Crowd,* appended to this present collection of essays. Even all these second thoughts still do not give a sufficient idea of the actual changes and shifts in Riesman's position. In the preface to the new paperback edition of *The Lonely Crowd* he explains some of his previous optimism in the following way: "We were writing at a time when the miasma that settled in the land during the era of the Cold War and the Eisenhower Administration was not yet at hand, com-

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placency about America combined with anti-communism had not yet merged into the American Way." He admits "a too great readiness to consider traditional interpretations as 'dated.'" (A new name keeps appearing in Riesman's recent work: Reinhold Niebuhr and "tragic realism." I venture to guess, Riesman fashion, that this is the new thing.)

The rapid obsolescence of some of Riesman's ideas came from his way of being too quick to turn observations into general statements. Fashions were often mistaken for the enduring American character. Now, when the outside world seems to change more rapidly and more drastically than ever before, the amount of revision the busy opinionizer will be in for is too much to be practical. Even such a profound matter as the education of the young was changed, in the mind of important sections of society, by the news of Sputnik and that alone. New aspects of the national personality may be suddenly brought to life by a political or military event. For the sake of argument, one can imagine that if we were trapped and isolated behind a hard position from which we could not retreat, an America, inner-directed in the manner of Dutch South Africa would be a possibility. It is the over-estimation of trends by Riesman that makes the use of the name of de Toqueville misleading as a comparison.

To quote Norman Birnbaum again in his description of the changed Riesman: "The politics of abundance, in its American form, now strike him as less open; he is, in general, critical of America's role in the world. Most of all he is terrible frightened of the prospect of atomic war." The sociologists in this collection hardly consider, however, the possibility that a truly radical questioning of our life would make it impossible for Riesman to continue to use his old methods. The interview and questionaire methods of social research are particularly vulnerable, or so one would think. The interest in vague details almost presupposes an acceptance of the central aims of the society. How could a man profoundly worried about the future of his country take part in what Riesman himself describes as "the enormous stream of social-psychological research now being devoted to conformity, yea-saying, acquiescence, etc." In a frightened nation, few will worry about what a small number of high school students think of success or excellence. This would be somewhat true even if we were not frightened; as it is, the crisis makes these questionaires unintelligible as a professional pursuit. In this book, the work of Elaine Sofer with college students is recommended for its creative way of approaching the measurement of inner-direction and other-direction. But the most striking thing about Miss Sofer's work is the trouble she has making anything meaningful out of the answers

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she got to her questions. The less pretentious public opinion polls, concentrating on current issues, are the most valid use of the method—and we all know how little use they are.

By all of this I mean to say I was disappointed that the new Riesman did not, except in a few essays, particularly the one by Norman Birnbaum, appear in *Culture and Social Character,* and the appearance he does make in this book devoted to him is already somewhat out of date. His entrance into the political debate will make an enormous difference in his whole point of view. For the sociology he practiced in the past, the moment was everything, eternity nothing. But the news of the day changes the attitudes these scholars are measuring faster than projects and books and scholarly papers can keep up with them.

A word about the style of the sociologist, even though one hesitates to remark again on what has been so much spoken about—the barbarous language, the incoherence and ugliness of most of this writing. It took an enormous amount of will power on my part to read through this collection of essays. I suppose I shall be called one of those with a "grudge against sociology." And why not have a grudge? I have come to the belief that there is not merely an accidental relationship between bad writing and routine sociological research, but a wonderfully pure integral relationship; the badness is necessary and inevitable. The insights of these people will necessarily be "insightful," and speculation about "affection" will soon have you reading of "high warmth factors," and "indentification with the warmth indulger." It is the extreme fragility of the insights that leads to the debasement of language; the need to turn merely interesting and temporary observations into general theory and large application seems the source of the trouble with these incredible compositions. By seeking a false significance, a tone of professionalism, perhaps it is natural that the "affectionate person" will have to be called the "warmth indulger."

To return once more to Riesman, the rightness or even the permanence of his opinions cannot be decided now with so many remote conditions to be considered. However, it is always interesting to watch a man changing his mind, especially when the man has, like Riesman, had a huge success with his previous views. (Eric Fromm's new book *May Man Prevail* is another instance of astonishing revision.) How can one describe such leaps into the discomforts of a critical position? Regret and courage seem to play equal parts—and from this dialogue the most unusual possibilities suggest themselves.

Elizabeth Hardwick

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TO FIND THE WESTWARD PATH

A NEW LIFE. By Bernard Malamud. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $4.95.

Easterners have used up many versions of the American Far West. Fact, historians' hypothesis, entrepreneurial dream; repository of Kitsch mythologies; a coast, mostly; a vast ideological blur, ranging from Southern California, an allegory of Inauthenticity, through San Francisco, a Real City, to the vaguer reaches of the healthy North: the whole expanse seemingly christened after the author of *Miss Lonelyhearts*. But now jets have tied it to New York, academic empires have spawned, San Francisco has invented avant-garde literature and Caligula Hollywood died and has been deified as a cherished dream. Sociological, moral and sexual frontiers have long since bleached out the significance of the historical one, and for some time the West has seemed to be unusable for the American imagination, having become so, perhaps, while the South was siezing its title to The Other Place.

But in Mr. Malamud's latest novel we are given a new vision. "My God, the West!" exclaims his hero at the beginning of the book; it is a Pacific North-west, a world of geniality and frankness at which Levin has arrived to start teaching at the agricultural and engineering branch of a state university (not, as he had innocently supposed before getting there, at the central campus itself). It is the gradual decay of that world which the book unfolds. A garden of promise where simplicity seems to have been purchased only at the expense of crowding and desperation falls to an American reality where local political battles can seem to be mental fight and where sexual fulfillment passes as the only morally authentic enterprise. In the opening sentence we see "S. Levin, formerly a drunkard, after a long and tiring transcontinental journey" getting off a train to confront a disarming hospitality, nice people with funny names, and an almost emblematically hopeful landscape. By the end of the book, after the fable-like anonymity of "S. Levin" has become the "Sy" that his academic colleagues call him and the "Lev" of his girl, experience ejects him into a real world cleared of any visionary gleam. And the garden of paradise has become a National Park. As he sets off for a real new life at last, with a newly acquired family and no concrete plans for a future, he is able to read correctly the allegory of the landscape:

> Levin drove to the edge of town for a last look at the mountains. The clouds were a clash of horses and volcanoes.
> "Beautiful country."
> "If beauty isn't all that happens."

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Life has, of course, happened, and the "new life" of the title can now be known to dawn only in the heart. But at the beginning of the story, the West does indeed appear to be a *Morgenland* of renewal, just as, traditionally, spaciousness of scene seems to mean Possibility. As we first see it, the new life is an innocently modest version of the American Dream. Levin has come west from high-school teaching and personal despair in New York to what he hopes will be the first of the steps to a Parnassus of worth and accomplishment. Levin is not the typical, sophisticated exile from the Eastern graduate school who, to use an analogy from the world of Mr. Malamud's first novel, is being farmed out to a minor-league ball-club after serving as a bat-boy in the majors. He is uniquely capable of accepting the drudgery of four sections of freshman composition, the tears of co-eds and the parochial inanities of English Department politics with something more than passive tolerance. From this viewpoint, Mr. Malamud has been able to write what is among other things the best academic novel so far. Minor bureaucratic types, using the Academy as an alternative to either a Cloth to which no calling has come or a Management which seems to threaten, are reverently portrayed. Levin's sincerity and *engagement* throughout his attempt to keep faith with The Word by championing better textbooks and eventually running, in a mad way, for the chairmanship of his department, enable the author to treat what Dr. Johnson would have called the difference in size between a flea and a gnat without the cruelty of distant observation. Even though he is fired at the end of the year, Levin manages to institute some reforms.

But these can constitute no victory for him. Mr. Malamud never divides his hero's private world of love from a public one of affairs and decisions: Levin is by no means a C. P. Snow-bound man with *troubles* at home but *problems* to be faced around a conference table. His love affair with Pauline Gilley, the wife of a colleague, connects the realms of school and bed just as it helps to pour the pain of the old life into the shining cup of the new. It is only after that cup has been dissolved by its very contents that Levin can set out on what is truly a pioneering journey, his old Hudson sedan laden with impediments and responsibilities sexually incurred. This journey can finally move traditionally westward, at least in the sense that it rides heavily and dreamlessly, on creaking wheels, toward an unreceding future.

Admirers of Mr. Malamud's previous fiction will be interested in some new facets of his work which emerge in *A New Life*. The first of these is his splendid writing about sex. Ours is a time in which the description of lovemaking has become a literary convention, when "hot

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scenes" are almost mandatory in fiction with any pretensions to seriousness, and when there can occur the paradox of a novelist like Wright Morris, who writes all the more intensely, apparently, about the war between men and women by avoiding specificity in sexual description. It is thus reassuring to the spirit of literary realism to find Mr. Malamud using encounters in and out of bed so effectively and convincingly. Levin's women in the book include a co-ed with whom he has a dream-like, unreal weekend, a wonderfully funny pseudo-picaresque encounter with a waitress, in a barn, and, finally, the reality of his complicated and protracted affair with Pauline.

Another interesting question raised by his third novel is Mr. Malamud's treatment of Levin's Jewishness, which, in the reasonable air of North-western democracy, practically vanishes. He is thought of by everyone else in the book as an Easterner only. Even the glimpse we have of his family background shows us something different from any of the typical modes of Jewish life in America. Only at the end of the book does Pauline reveal to him that the crystallization of her love for him was catalyzed by his resemblance to a Jewish boy she had once known. Here again, it is almost as if the author were reacting against something more than the direction of his own earlier work, against a budding convention which has led to the trotting-out of even the most assimilated of Jewish middle-class backgrounds as a treasure-trove of Experience in college creative-writing courses. The character of Levin poses its author some problems, and while he has not gone so far with an uneasily-willed *persona* as Saul Bellow with Henderson or Norman Mailer with O'Shaughnessy, there seem to be some inconsistencies of identification and fictional distance between Mr. Malamud and his protagonist.

A New Life may, however, represent Mr. Malamud's attempt to break out of a limited, almost regional area of performance in which, like such different writers as Flannery O'Connor and J. F. Powers, he has been most successful. One may have to have been an academic to like his latest novel as much as I did; I hope not. But its new version of an old American pastoral encounter redeems it from the provinces of any smaller genre. It is a unique kind of book, and for its author's future work, it promises excellent results.

John Hollander

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DRAPES

*CURTAINS. Kenneth Tynan. Atheneum. $7.95.

Is the title of this collection a pun ("It's curtains for me, pal")? Certainly, Tynan belongs to the school of wits who have been indentured to dramatic criticism: Beerbohm, Benchley, George Jean Nathan, Wolcott Gibbs. A turn-of-the-century example was the American humorist Eugene Field who said of a Claudius in *Hamlet,* "He plays the king as though somebody else were about to play the ace." Compare Tynan on Sir Ralph Richardson in *Macbeth*: ". . . a man long past feeling who had been stumping across the broad stage as if in need of a compass to find the exit." Or of an American "method" actor: ". . . he conforms to that modish acting technique, mistakenly associated with the teachings of Stanislavsky, whereby gesture precedes utterance by at least five seconds." Or—less drawling and japish—on Gielgud in modern dress: "The general aspect of a tight, smart, walking umbrella." The gift of characterizing a performance within a line or two is related to the gift of caricature; it is visual, like a cartoon. The written equivalent of caricature is surely parody, and Tynan, like Beerbohm, like Benchley, like Gibbs, is a facile parodist. He has very funny take-offs of Graham Greene, of Beckett, of Teutonic dialogue, of love scenes from English country-house comedy; the best is his parody of Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun,* done in the style of the stage manager of Wilder's *Our Town*:

"Well, folks, reckon that's about it. End of another day in the city of Jefferson, Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi. Nothin' much happened. Couple of people got raped, couple more got their teeth kicked in, but way up there these faraway old stars are still doing their old cosmic criss-cross, and there ain't a thing we can do about it. Folks hereabouts get to bed early, those that can still walk. Down behind the morgue a few of the young people are roastin' a nigger over an open fire, but I guess every town has its night owls. . . . Movin' along toward dawn in our town. Pretty soon folks'll start up on that old diurnal round of sufferin' and expiatin' and spoutin' sentences two pages long. . . .'"

This double play (the allusion is to baseball) catches two runners on base.

Parody in certain cases (like this one) may be the best criticism, as leaving the room may be the best means of ending an argument. But it is not criticism; it is a kind of quoting. No author can be parodied successfully who has not already committed self-parody. Parody begins where words, in the sense of rational discourse, fail the critic. Rational

* This review also appeared in *The Observer* of London.

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discourse is not Tynan's strong point. When, for example, he tries to make an intellectual demonstration of the weaknesses of MacLeish's *J. B.* and decides that these are due to the author's failure to take account of "Oriental philosophy," the reader would settle gladly for a simple parody: a Zen *J. B.* by MacLeish is too horribly easy to imagine—that is just the trouble. Like most of the humorists who have written about the theatre, Tynan is less a critic than a performer and mime in his own right; his reviews are excited performances. He can make you see and hear an actor, sometimes a whole play or rather its production; he can spot a defect or a virtue, but he cannot reason or analyze. It is interesting that in a long "probing" piece on Shaw he fails to mention his intelligence. Instead he discovers what he takes to be a telling fact about Shaw, a give-away: "as a public playwright he could not create an artist; Dubedat is a parasite, and Marchbanks is a hollow fraud. . . ." This evidently expects the reader-response "How terrible!" But what public playwright could "create an artist?" Sophocles, Shakespeare, Congreve, Moliere, Wilde, John Osborne??? He suggests, sententiously, that Shaw was "scared to feel," yet there was a generous passion in Shaw that is absent from Tynan, who is most unconvincing when he is most in earnest, when he is writing valentines to Tennessee Williams, worshipping the Berliner Ensemble, exposing Ionesco ("as a serious thinker he is banal").

On his "positive" side, Tynan tends to write advertising copy. "This is an honest performance, true and watchful and ruthless." "The imposture is total and terrifying." "Peter Brook plants us firmly in Mexico." ". . . an artistic credo as stimulating as any in our time"—this of Arthur Miller's preface to *A View from the Bridge*. And of Miller and Tennessee Williams: "the finest two playwrights at present writing in English." "The exciting thing about Mr. Lawler is that he can also construct." This "quotable" manner of praising is sometimes like *Time* magazine, sometimes like *Mademoiselle*: "a select gaggle of alumni that includes Marlon Brando, Julie Harris, Eli Wallach, Marilyn Monroe . . ." He talks of "meaty" dialogue and refers to King Lear as "this huge flawed pyramid of a play." A "punchy" style of writing, packing in the metaphors, to advertise to the customers that it *is* writing.

At his best—on Sir Laurence Olivier, on Vivien Leigh—he is far, far better than these samples, but it is not a case of Homer nodding. In comparison with the average dramatic critic, he is a Angel, as Magwitch might say, but he will not bear comparison with Shaw, with Stark Young, with, today, Nicola Chiaromonte in Italy or Francis Fergusson in America, though it is not fair, probably, to compare him with

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Fergusson, who is neither a journalist nor a wit—it is like comparing pears to green. The worst I can say of Tynan is that I thought better of him when I began this book than when I finished it. There is too much common coin here or protective coloration; you cannot tell the butterfly from the log. The profiles of and interviews with stars and celebrities—Bea Lillie, Gordon Craig, Tennessee Williams, Cagney, W. C. Fields—are like *New Yorker* profiles or Sunday feature stories: "cute" personality pieces, biography and physical impressions factory-woven with anecdotes. Taken at random from the Bea Lillie piece: "Offstage she leads a fairly intense social life and has arguably slept through more hours of daylight than of dark." The "fairly" and "arguably" are unarguable *New Yorker* profile. We learn in the same paragraph that her "last Christmas present to Noel Coward was a baby alligator." Cute? Such journalism can be produced by automation, with the reader's chuckles built in.

On the opposite façade of Tynan is a somewhat adenoidal spokesman-for-those-under-thirty—didactic and moralizing. His general ideas comprehend a preference for prose theatre over verse theatre, a preference, until recently, for foreign writers over English writers, a belief that the drama should show "respect for ordinary people," and a definition of drama (it shows human beings reduced by ineluctable process to a state of desperation). But these reiterated thoughts (and I cannot find any others except for the insistence that the theatre is a public place) are not so much ideas as crochets, like the crochets of an old person. His wit and humor, moreover, have the middle-aged quality of long-suffering—the classic henpecked humor of the drama reviewer wedded to a seat on the aisle. The drama reviewer in fact is an archetype of the human being reduced by ineluctable process to a state of desperation: a state well defined by Tynan in his remark about *Requiem for a Nun,* which he was seeing for the fourth time. "I begin to understand how Francis Thompson felt when the Hound of Heaven picked up his spoor." Very good.

Mary McCarthy

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MORAVIA AND THE WORM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

THE EMPTY CANVAS. (LA NOIA) By Alberto Moravia. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. $4.50.

Let us hear what Moravia says in *La Noia* about boredom—that fundamental, ineradicable condition of all his work, which he treats explicitly for the first time in this last novel:

"For me. . .boredom is not the opposite of entertainment. On the contrary, I might even say that it resembles it in some respects, since it too produces distraction and forgetfulness, though of a particular kind. Boredom, for me, is really a sort of insufficiency or scantiness of reality. To use a metaphor, reality, when I am bored, has always had on me the disconcerting effect of too short a blanket on a winter night: pull it over one's feet and one's chest gets cold pull it over one's chest and one's feet get cold; and so it is impossible ever to really fall asleep. Yet again, my boredom could be defined as a disease of objects consisting of a sudden withering or loss of vitality, as though I were seeing a flower bud, wilt and turn to dust all within a few minutes. The principal aspect of boredom was a practical matter: while it was impossible to remain in my own company, I was the one person I could not possibly be rid of."

This is the mood that Moravia called indifference in his first novel. But indifference was concerned not with reality in general but with other people. It was a young man's incapacity to share the feelings, passions and desires that seem to give other people reasons for action that are, if not valid, at least clear and direct. It was accompanied by a great sadness and a sense of guilt the more depressing in that it had no ascertainable basis. One might say that the boredom felt by the protagonist of *La Noia* is indifference extended to everything real, to objects taken singly and together, from the most vexatious object of all: oneself, to the object that is most abstract and omnipresent: the world, in which things and creatures should be intelligible but instead only mirror, in an endless multiplication, a senselessness that is always the same.

We have said "mood." Moravia's boredom, on the contrary, is an inner condition that is both without a cause and chronic, that not only undermines the very possibility of experiencing different or changeable moods but infects the external world, rendering it uninhabitable and inadequate, not by reason of this or that deficiency but taken as a whole and, almost, without repeal.

At this point we pass from psychology as a physical manifestation to "metaphysics": to a zone, that is, where, for the observation and description of so-called facts is substituted the single haunting question of the relation, the seemingly unbridgeable gap, between the individual

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and objects, and where, for the image of the world as a place and source of events that are more or less happy, more or less painful, more or less unique, is substituted a feeling of weight, of the unbearable opacity of the world itself and of one's own existence in it. The world and its events seem a repeated experience of nonsense, our own existence a blind unalterable fact against which we rage in vain as we try to understand it. Perhaps there is nothing to understand, but we cannot help our rage.

Heidegger, in his essay "What is Metaphysics?," gives an account of boredom that is particularly appropriate to this condition. According to Heidegger, the first, most elementary experience we have of the world is that of its daily banality, in which things are presented one next to the other, one after the other and all together, without giving us any over-all reason for their being there. Thus experienced, the world seems clear whereas it is opaque, it seems to constitute a whole whereas it only presents a collection of objects and facts; it seems to make sense whereas it only leads us stupidly back to ourselves and to the objects which are its components.

If we take Heidegger's discourse as a metaphor, or a kind of myth, it can be said that, in a certain sense, all Moravia's work arises and is written as the result of the decision to accept the state of boredom as a fact: *he stops* at boredom and is incredulous of any further revelation. Therefore, he does nothing but reiterate that the daily world, the so-called natural and normal world with which most people content themselves, considering it the ultimate reality, is the only reality in that no other reality is given. Yet it is also a world of boredom, a *dead* world in the full sense of the word, a world that shuts us off from, rather than leads us into relation with reality.

Moravia's stories and novels are stories of this dead world. They are not naturalistic, or even realistic, naratives but repeated demonstrations of the unbearable reality of a dead world, this is, a world in which consciousness is both awake and inert. In this sense, the realism of Moravia is a purely moral realism, describing not things and events but their negative impression on consciousness; one might even say, their negation *by* consciousness, which obstinately, stoically rejects them, holding them at a distance.

Moravia's realism, reduced to its essence, presents us with the image of a repeated, almost insanely senseless collision between the unconsciousness and the banality of facts. It is a monotonous collision without catharsis, an end in itself. What Moravia is actually describing again and again in the detailed treatment of facts is the insufficiency of reality ("the blanket that is too short"). Thus it is inevitable that each time,

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from the start, he should present us with the fact of consciousness, that he should make us feel at work the worm of consciousness. A book of his, therefore, is not a fable; it is above all an experience of truth. There are dozens of writers capable of describing outward appearance and sensation more clearly, more gracefully than Moravia. But there is no one to equal him in seizing the moments in which reality, piercing through the mist of velleity and pretense, begins to exist and to take on the meaning of its own overwhelming essence. These are the moments in which we feel that sureness of a man who has plumbed the depths of his own experience, who, when he speaks, arrives immediately at what is important. It is then that Moravia succeeds in eliciting the feeling of extreme uneasiness and depression from a gesture, a physical contact, a glance, or the most opaque piece of matter. It is this, not the "joy of narrating," that gives the story its impetus, and it is toward this that the story moves. The plot is the "objective correlative" of his irremediable condition of the soul. It arises from the author's desire to force it into the structure of a daily reality conceived as a "commonplace" of experience, not from a wish to depict the progress of a real action in the continuity of real time.

La Noia seems to me an admirably concise, sharp and energetic example of this fundamental, constantly repeated situation. In its moral and artistic economy, it is perhaps the most successful of all Moravia's work.

The hero of the novel is an abstract painter who one day, "at last authentically inspired after so many attempts," hurls himself on the picture he is painting and slashes it to piece with his knife. After this he feels free either to begin all over again or else to recognize frankly the fact that he has failed. "A failure, not because I was unable to paint pictures that were pleasing to others; but because I felt that my paintings did not permit me to express myself, that is, to delude myself into thinking that I was relating to things."

Here then is a man facing a truth which, though extremely disheartening, is yet better than an illusion. He is alone before an image of himself "for various reasons unbearable," in an atonic world. He can do, or let himself go and do, anything at all. One day he finds himself making a gesture to a girl. "As she passed under my window, I saw her look up at me, but this time without smiling. I raised my hand to take the cigarette from my mouth, but instead I found myself making an unmistakable sign to her to come back." That is how things happen, the writer seems to be saying; that is how we become involved in reality.

From this involuntary gesture, at once gratuitous and inevitable, the gist of the tale, the story not of love or eroticism, but of the

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frustrated desire for possession and consciousness takes its impetus. The relationship between the painter and the girl is naked, mechanical and clean as a bone—or better, as a skeleton. No one has depicted a series of carnal acts, frenzied yet cold in their automatism—nudity, desire and its outlet—with such complete lack of complacence, such impassive truthfulness. For Moravia does not describe bodies or their acts; he makes us feel their existence and, at the same time, their unreality: their refusal to be comprehended, their mechanicalness, their blind fatality. In the void of boredom, the triumph of physical love over every other vital impulse is represented with an annihilating vehemence that recalls the triumph of death and decay over earthly vanities and pleasures in the frescoes at Pisa.

"At first. . .it (physical love) seemed to me something very natural. . . . But now it struck me above all by its lack of naturalness, like an act that was in some way against nature, that is, artificial and absurd. Walking, sitting, lying down, climbing, descending and all such bodily actions now seemed to me to have a necessity, and therefore a naturalness of their own. Copulation, on the other hand, seemed to me an extravagant tour de force for which the human body was not made and to which it could adapt itself only with strain and effort. Everything, I thought, can be done easily, with grace and harmony, everything except the act of love. The very conformation of the two sexual organs, the female organ difficult of access, the male organ unable to reach its goal autonomously like an arm or leg, but needing, rather, to be aided by the whole body, seemed to me to indicate the absurdity of sexual intercourse."

Moravia does not say that this is love. He says that in the situation in which we find ourselves, it would be dishonest to represent it in any other way. On the other hand, he seems to be saying that in the situation in which we find ourselves sex, denuded as it is of any vibration of the spirit, is also a truth, the only access we still have to nature. *Etre la matiere*, the last words of Flaubert's St. Anthony, expresses the only form of mystical longing of which modern man is capable. True hell is not there: true hell is in the unnecessary, in all that hides us from ourselves, hiding from us the fact that we are living in a morally dead world. This reality is described by Moravia with unequaled ferocity in the parts of the novel showing the relationship between the hero and his mother and describing the luxury, money, empty words and permanent spiritual blindness of a being in whom possessiveness and greed are walled within the most deadly of the passions: inert self-satisfaction. It is from such places as the villa where this woman lives that boredom spreads out over the world.

Nicola Chiaromonte

(*translated by Barbara Loeb Kennedy*)

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THE ROAD FROM ROME

ADVICE TO A PROPHET. By Richard Wilbur. Harcourt, Brace. $3.75.

Richard Wilbur is a sturdy Roman legionary of the arts, a figure whose archaisms, compounded, become original in their energy, charm and polish. For the good reader of leftish sympathies he ought to be a secret vice, for there is nothing illiberal in his nature and his best poems make one of the very few actively spacious worlds in modern poetry. Nevertheless he offers some whacking paradoxes to criticism. On the platform he looks like someone in a Civil War photograph, yet elegance is the word most commonly used of his poetry. He revels in sonorous Johnsonian epithets like ". . . gulls colonial on the sullied ice" or "The bronze annals of the oak tree . . ." but the most affecting poem in this book finds him peering domestically under the ripped-up floorboards of a room in his house, searching for

> *. . . the buried strangeness*
> *Which nourishes the known:*
> *That spring from which the floor-lamp*
> *Drinks now a wilder bloom,*
> *Inflaming the damask love-seat*
> *And the whole dangerous room.*

Wilbur would be a less interesting poet if he were easier to come by. I wish I could surrender to the temptation merely to assert, in good, gruff New England tones, that Wilbur says all the good, true New England things about Life, Humanity, Nature and the *lacrimae rerum* and says them with a skill that reflects credit on the whole humanist enterprise of the Eastern seaboard. Much of Wilbur, indeed, stifles criticism by swinging along a broad noonday highway of common feelings and common ideas, followed by a baggage-wagon of loot from all over the world. This is the colonizer and editorialist whose poems review themselves as they progress, as much in careful silences and formal sheernesses as in those muscular verbs, verbal adjectives and nouns that hustle you past moments of doubt.

> *Shift at the corner into uproarious gear*
> *And make it around the turn in a squall of traction,*
> *The headlong bell maintaining sure and clear,*
> Thought is degraded action!
>
> *Beautiful, heavy, unweary, loud, obvious thing!*

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This description of a firetruck is offered with a grin, but offered nevertheless. Wilbur's ironies, when not whimsical, are likely to be ferocious, as in his early "To an American Poet Just Dead." Wilbur is essentially a Broad Church, Wordsworthian poet and Americans in general are not much given to either irony, elegance or pomp as a regular thing. I suspect his appeal derives as much from his ability to undermine his Latin kingdom of the mind as from his skill in conjuring it up. He does so deliberately, in spells of boyish or manly downrightness, in fits of the plain Nordic hoo-has (pessimism), but also unconsciously, by a certain cautionary imbalance between the mightiness of his conclusions and the sinuous slightness of his forms. *Caveat lector,* say many of his poems, if you take me at face value, *tant pis pour vous.*

Self-consciousness takes its toll, and I confess to liking the earlier poetry of *Ceremony* better than the no less accomplished poems of *Advice to a Prophet,* a small collection in any case, thirty-one poems of which seven are translations. In *Ceremony* he seemed to reach the climax of his inner struggle between domesticity and the intoxication of pure experience, the perilous attraction, in a world gone suburban, of qualities, energies, immensities and solitudes just off the main line—in a Wellfleet house, a piece of driftwood, a Renaissance palace. This produced a vital oscillation between the long and short views, between the beauty of patient survival and a surrender to sensation. The beauty of strangeness was not looked for or evoked; it was *there,* fitfully, in the language, offsetting the occasional banality of the "message."

Advice to a Prophet shows an advance in domestication as well as a growing tendency, like Lowell's, to draw his themes from other poets. "To Ishtar" and "She" follow in Graves's footsteps, "Loves of the Puppets" is straight Ransom-on-the-rocks, "Junk" is amusing neo-Saxon in a vein well exploited by Pound and Auden. Other poems bear down in elegant but also somewhat schoolmasterly fashion on vampires, *fainéants,* Laodiceans, the slackers and fakers of this imperfect world.

This mellowing of a poet with Wilbur's capacity for contempt reminds one of the same phenomenon in E. A. Robinson. I must say I regret it. But having made these objections I have no more. Wilbur is still very much a poet to be savored—and reckoned with.

R. W. Flint

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FICTION CHRONICLE

RADITZER. By Peter Matthiessen. Viking. $3.00.
THE BEAUTIFUL GREED. By David Madden. Random House. $3.95.
CLEM ANDERSON. By R. V. Cassill. Simon & Schuster. $5.95.
THREE NOVELS: Summer in Williamsburg, Homage to Blenholt, Low Company. By Daniel Fuchs. Basic Books. $7.95.
SELECTED TALES. By Nikolai Leskov. Translated by David Magarshack. Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. $5.00.

What makes the first three otherwise quite different pieces of writing so flat? I think the answer is quite simple: their authors' lack of talent as storytellers. These men may be writers, but they aren't story writers, not in these books. It is often said that there is never any lack of talent, every generation has as much of it as another; the difficulty is to bring the talent to fruition. Well, the difficulty here, it seems to me, is lack of talent.

Peter Matthiessen's *Raditzer* concerns a scrawny Thersites of the wartime Navy whose bottom-dog shamelessness, defiantly asserted against the contempt of those around him, forces his fellow men "to face their own frailty as represented in himself." The one person he exempts, with half-mocking idealization, from his worm's-eye view of human motives is an upper-class shipmate and unwilling friend; but the only result of this is that the latter's tidy spiritual world and all too "suitable" marriage, which he has already begun to question, come crashing down the harder at the end. This is a perfectly good idea, but it never gets to be a story. We don't *see* the meanings that the author tells us are being enacted, we just hear about them from him. Although Raditzer possesses a certain ratty-pathetic animation, he falls far short of the kind of reality that the idea of him requires; the other characters don't exist at all. But I don't think Mr. Matthiessen's trouble is that he can't draw characters. Some storytellers create an overflowing life (Daniel Fuchs, whom I take up later, is one of these); others—and perhaps they are the best ones—get along with very little in the way of character life, only as much as their story absolutely needs (the last writer on my list, Nikolai Leskov, is a good example here). The action, if it is conceived with truth and force, carries everything else along with it. Mr. Matthiessen falls down in his *story;* the failure of his characters follows that.

The title of David Madden's novel, *The Beautiful Greed,* is from *Lord Jim* (the greed that is meant is for sea adventure) and the hero

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also carries a copy of *Lord Jim* in his duffle. The story concerns a young fellow who must find the courage, with the help of a world-weary old hand who is the ship's scapegoat, to possess his own manhood. So the general intention of the novel, as well as the title, is Conradian. But the style and quality of the narrative are the opposite of Conradian. Instead of long reflective sentences, a rich commentary on the action, and slowly ripening significances, Mr. Madden's story has short declarative sentences and abrupt transitions, few observations, and a significance so little realized as hardly to exist without the title and the epigraph. I don't of course accuse Mr. Madden of failing to write like Conrad. An author may come to his subject matter through a master and take his title and even the intention of his work from him, and still be free to produce his own very different kind of story. You can write just as well with short declarative sentences as with long reflective ones, maybe even better. But Mr. Madden's short sentences are bald and jejune, catching only the surface of things, and so is his story. After invoking the name of Conrad which stands for the magic of storytelling if any name does, Mr. Madden proceeds to rattle the dry knucklebones of a narrative style that is about as unmagical as one could be.

I turn with some relief to *Clem Anderson,* by R. V. Cassill. He is no storyteller either. But his swollen (627 pages), wordy novel, which is madly pedantic and self-obsessed and which falls about as flat as a story can fall, is nevertheless an interesting failure: one must respect how much he cares about literature, and the passion with which he denounces the corruption of contemporary literary culture. *Clem Anderson* is about the life and work, decline and early death of a modern American literary genius, as told by his college teacher friend. He is supposed to represent the "natural and demon-driven writer," full of wit and fate, greatness and subversion. But this is purely a literary intention; in actual, dramatic fact Clem is none of these things. His wit is lame, his fate unreal, as a subversive he is little more than a wise guy, and his greatness as a man and a writer is pure declamation on the author's part. Not that the author doesn't try with embarrassing literalness to make Clem live as a writer. My God, how he tries! We are given whole poems and parts of poems by Clem Anderson, and a long extract from his novel. But this kind of feat is always hard to pull off. The poems are pastiches, lacking just that individuality which Clem is supposed to possess, and the extract from his novel reads much like the main novel, although Clem is supposed to be the wild creative type and his friend a dry-as-dust teacher and critic.

Clem's corruption and decline as a man and a writer is represented

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as a prophetic embracing of the fate of his generation—"as a writer I was nothing if I did not go with you into your wilderness." The main emphasis of the book lies here, on corruption and decline. The best things the novel has to say are on this theme, but only when it says them more or less straight out, as direct criticism. The following observations are by Bentley, a literary critic in the story:

. . . old reputations were being manipulated like stocks. Granted that it would be monstrous to fix once and for all any reputation. . . . But what was beginning was not the normal shift of interest—it was trading. Just as there were bulls for Henry James running his stock up, so there were bears out to depreciate the Whitman stock. "And they'll sell him back, too, one of these days," Bentley said . . . "Just as is done in Wall Street, they'll shake out the crumbs—the small investors in Whitman—and when everyone is sneering at poor old Walt they'll switch and 'discover' him. Glory to the discoverers! A corner in the dispensation of critical reputations!

There were bulls (just now) for Melville. Bears for Dreiser. Bulls for Donne and all the metaphysical poets. Bears for the romantics. Bulls for *Madame Bovary*. Bears for Thomas Mann. . . Where would it end? Where but in the destruction of all that could decently call itself literary education? It would end with all discrimination vested in the staffs of publishing houses, they deciding . . . where to dip into the treasury of literature for each year's fashionable flood of reprints. "The presses will run," Bentley said. "They will run as never before, and the sheer mass of esoteric titles available in cheap editions will silence any criticism of cultural famine. Every poor booby of a student who finds Arnold's prose too difficult for comprehension will be carrying Pascal and Meister Eckhart in his pants pocket like a passport." When this situation matured, the teacher would be finally denied his library. . . .

The best thing about *Clem Anderson* is its concern for literature; the worst thing about it is its literariness. It is monstrously literary, full of the titles of books, references to literary characters, and that awful humor which consists in talking cutely in literary quotations. The sections into which it is divided have such titles as "The Passage of a Faun," "Knight Riding Between Death and the Devil," etc., etc. But it is most literary in being entirely constructed out of the head, a purely literary construction such as you rarely see, all fabrication and arrangement, wooden movements and unreal conversations.

The novelists I have been talking about aren't really storytellers, as I say, but literary artificers or journalists. With Daniel Fuchs we come to the storytellers. It was certainly a good idea to gather together his three novels, which first appeared in 1934, 1936 and 1937, and republish them in one volume. How well they stand up—even though they are social novels and deal with a first- and second-genera-

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tion Jewish immigrant life that has just about disappeared. Earlier I gave Mr. Fuchs as an example of the storyteller who creates an overflowing life rather than a powerful action. In *Summer in Williamsburg* he does this quite directly; it has no real plot but is a series of crowded scenes through which the young observer threads his way. The impression is one of bursting vitality; these pages swarm with an almost biological life of housewives and storekeepers, gangsters and crones, shabby sages and preposterous "intellectuals." (But with these last I think that Mr. Fuchs falls down badly; he seems to have a personal argument with intellectuals and with "culture" in general, and loses his detachment.) This of course is a familiar genre of writing and it labors under severe limitations—pure panorama, without a shaping action, forces the writer to find his significance in some large, vague gesture of affirmation or rejection. But Mr. Fuchs handles the genre better than most and also takes a more complicated attitude toward his scenes than the simplistic ones usually found in this kind of novel.

Perhaps I can get at this attitude best through a comparison with Isaak Babel. There is more than one Babelesque touch in *Summer in Williamsburg,* the Babel of Benya Krik and the Odessa Tales. Here is one of them: "From Williamsburg appeared one Anschele B. Nussbaum, and concerning him as a lawyer the legend was great." But Babel rejoiced in the life of Odessa Jewry and painted it in delighted colors; Benya Krik is a great man, a hero, a *king*—Babel's calling him a king is not ironical but a loving hyperbole. Papravel, the optimistic businessman-racketeer whom Mr. Fuchs hits off perfectly, is an ironic commentary on America and American Jewish self-satisfaction:

> "Listen, boys," said Papravel from a full heart and with exuberant satisfaction, "it's a party. Tonight we celebrate because all that comes, knock wood, is good news. Morantz [who owns the bus line that competes with the one under Papravel's protection for the traffic between Williamsburg and the "mountains], he's quit not only in Williamsburg but in the mountains altogether. We bought him out [he was strong-armed!]. As for Gilhooley [who killed a state trooper], let no one say Papravel don't take good care of his boys for Anschele Nussbaum here has everything fixed right, only give us a little time and God's help. And just this morning the railroad company sent out an announcement they take no more passengers, only freight. And it is only a beginning, because, remember, there is still a God over America."

Mr. Fuchs really doesn't like Papravel or Williamsburg one bit, for all his apparently tolerant, amused wonder at their unself-conscious, unself-questioning activity and beingness; he shows more than an occasional touch of callousness toward them in his writing. Innocent fools

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or criminal fools, in frantic pursuit of their crazy hopes and illusions. Nor are the literary aspirations of the author's young observer, Philip, any less of an illusion. The author shrugs his shoulders with saturnine depreciation of all this life and comedy, volubility and effort; wisdom lies in resignation. This attitude is no affectation; it underlies and helps to explain all three novels. It is an attitude in the ancient Jewish tradition of Ecclesiastes: Vanity of vanities, Koheleth said, all is vanity. Philip makes it explicit at the end of *Summer in Williamsburg*:

> No novel, no matter how seriously intentioned, was real. . . . People did not live in dramatic situations. . . . Literature was not reality. That was all there was to it. Writers who said otherwise were fakers, claiming more than they could do. . . . Poetry and heroism did not exist, but the movies did. . . . A man must be active, he must make money. What was Philip kidding around for . . .
>
> "Vainly, said Philip (Lo! and also, Behold!), "do I seek within me something magnificent, worth enthusiasm, worth labor, to guide me for the next forty or fifty years to come."

Mr. Fuchs, whose work has so much reality, writes that literature isn't reality. (The way Koheleth puts it is: "All things toil to weariness; man cannot utter it"; and further: "of making many books there is no end.") Literature, along with so many other hopes, is an illusion, and anybody who nurses illusions is a dope. The author wrote three novels in the thirties and then stopped, turning to the movies, which "exist."

Homage to Blenholt is about some dopes who nurse illusions. The leading one is Balkan and he finds unreality delicious. Walking through the morning mist of Williamsburg, Balkan makes out the milkman's ghostly horse: "Who has seen the white horse? Balkan asked, his face drawn tensely in the attitude of the mysteries. Who rides the white horse? Where is the whosis? Where is the oompah-oompah? Balkan had to emerge to laugh ruefully at himself. Well, why not? he asked." This is the most original of the three novels, full of verve and wit and irony, and it is also the most malign. There is real hatred and contempt in it. Max Balkan dreams up commercial ideas which he desperately insists will make him rich and powerful, a modern Tamburlaine, like Blenholt, the dead Commissioner of Sewers, who shook down pushcart peddlers with his hired cutthroats to make himself mighty, and whom Balkan wishes to pay homage to at his funeral. Balkan's friend Munves is an amateur etymologist who catches Krapp and Kennedy putting Sealwudu in Essex. His father is a superannuated Yiddish actor who marches around all day in a clown's costume between signboards advertising beauty treatments. The women mock all this dreaming with

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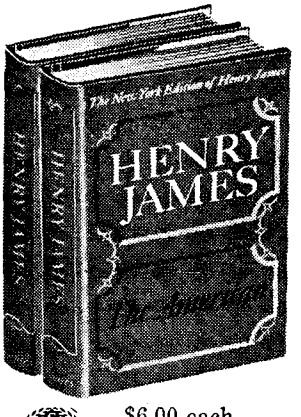

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their fantastic tongues, but what do they want to do: see Joan Crawford at the Miramar. Realists! When all the illusions are exploded, Mr. Balkan the father brings the novel to an end with these musings:

> . . . in the gentle haze of muddy reflection he stood for some time near the couch, in his great patched checkered suit with the enormous shoes, in his tremendous collar, the paint and the signs. . . . for a moment he was taken back again, dreaming of Melbourne and King Lear. Alone, unseen, Mr. Balkan raised his chest, stood . . . tall and strong . . . Pompously he strutted around in the empty room, in rich pantomime, thinking of his greatest successes, of Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth and Tamburlaine. Mr. Balkan grandly lifted his arm ready to declaim, but with the corners of his eyes he spotted his wife. She had been standing at the doorway of the kitchen, her hands on her hips, restraining the guffaws until she was purple in the face.
>
> "Mr. Fumfotch!" she finally burst out and roared joyously.
>
> "Sh, sh," the old man said and picked up the boards.
>
> Then he knew what it was that had been troubling him vaguely before. In his wife's earthy guffaws he recognized the clamorous demands of the world, its insistent calls for resignation and surrender, and he knew now that Max would never be the same again. Much had gone out of Max, aspiration, hope, life. His son would grow old and aging, die, but actually Max was dead already for now he would live for bread alone. That was the rule and few men were strong enough to disobey it. . . . And regretting the way of the world, Mr. Balkan realized that he had witnessed the exact point at which his son had changed from youth to resigned age. Walking out of the house and shifting the shoulder straps to get the signs comfortably settled, it seemed to the old man that this death of youth was among the greatest tragedies in experience and that all the tears in America were not enough to bewail it.
>
> But all the same the evening sun that day went down on time.

This is the wisdom of Koheleth, which says you might as well lie down because you are already dead.

Low Company shifts the scene to the more open terrain of Neptune (Brighton) Beach; it shows no flagging in inventiveness or any tendency on the writer's part to repeat himself. The novel is full of brilliant portraits: the pathetic brothel operator Shubunka, who doesn't quite come off but who still achieves a remarkably original quality; the frenzied horseplayer Moe Karty, who makes one writhe with uneasiness; the dreadful owner of the icecream parlor, Mr. Spitzbergen, in whom all commercial sordidness is summed up; Mrs. Spitzbergen, who though she only makes a short appearance in the novel is an almost supernal vision of assuaging female tenderness; the soda jerker Shorty; and the relief man, a very minor character but a creation of genius—he shouldn't be overlooked. *Low Company* has a much stronger action than the other novels, and brilliant effects; but I do not think it speaks as profoundly

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out of the author's feelings as *Homage to Blenholt.* And it makes an about-face at the end to conclude on a false, perfunctory note of affirmation. The man who is the novel's moral consciousness, and its palest character, realizes that he has been wrong "simply to hate Neptune Beach and seek escape from it. . . . He had known the people at Ann's [the soda parlor] in their lowness and had been repelled by them, but now it seemed to him that he understood how their evil appeared in their impoverished dingy lives and, further, how miserable their own evil rendered them. . . . He decided to go back to his own rooms in Neptune." Was the author finally intimidated by the times, with their demand that one should go to the people?

Mr. Fuchs' introduction moved me. In it he says that his novels didn't sell: "400 copies, 400, 1200." When he sold a story to the *Saturday Evening Post* for $600, he "decided to become rich. I was in the middle of a fourth novel but broke it up and swiftly turned it into three or four short stories." Realism! I hope we may still see that fourth novel, and more. There may be no end to the making of books, but how many good ones are there?

My last volume is Nikolai Leskov's *Selected Tales* and I find that I am exhausted. Yet I must say a few words about this fine writer. Leskov, V. S. Pritchett tells us in his introduction, was ostracized during his life time (1831-1895) by Russian criticism, which the Left dominated, because, "although a man of the Left, he was religious and unable to attach himself as a partisan." His religion was Quakerism; later he became a Tolstoyan.

His "Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District" is a story of the most powerful and simple truth; it describes the young wife of an elderly Russian merchant whom sexual love seizes absolutely; it makes her commit murder after murder, but we do not lose our sympathy for her. Her passion is utter fate; one stares at it helplessly, unsheltered by morality. I also liked "The Sentry," an ironical tale about the Russian bureaucracy. Oddly enough considering its subject matter, it has great sweetness. Or perhaps this is not so odd, for sweetness seems to be a distinguishing characteristic of Leskov's writing. There are other good stories, all well translated by David Magarshack. One story, and the longest one by far—"The Enchanted Wanderer"—escaped me, though Mr. Pritchett and the translator speak very highly of it. I notice it seems to have escaped other reviewers. Perhaps it has a peculiarly Russian quality that is unable to survive the passage into another language.

Martin Greenberg

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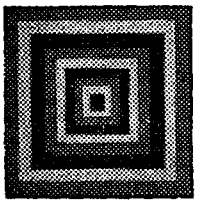

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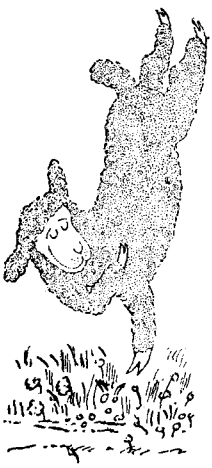

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